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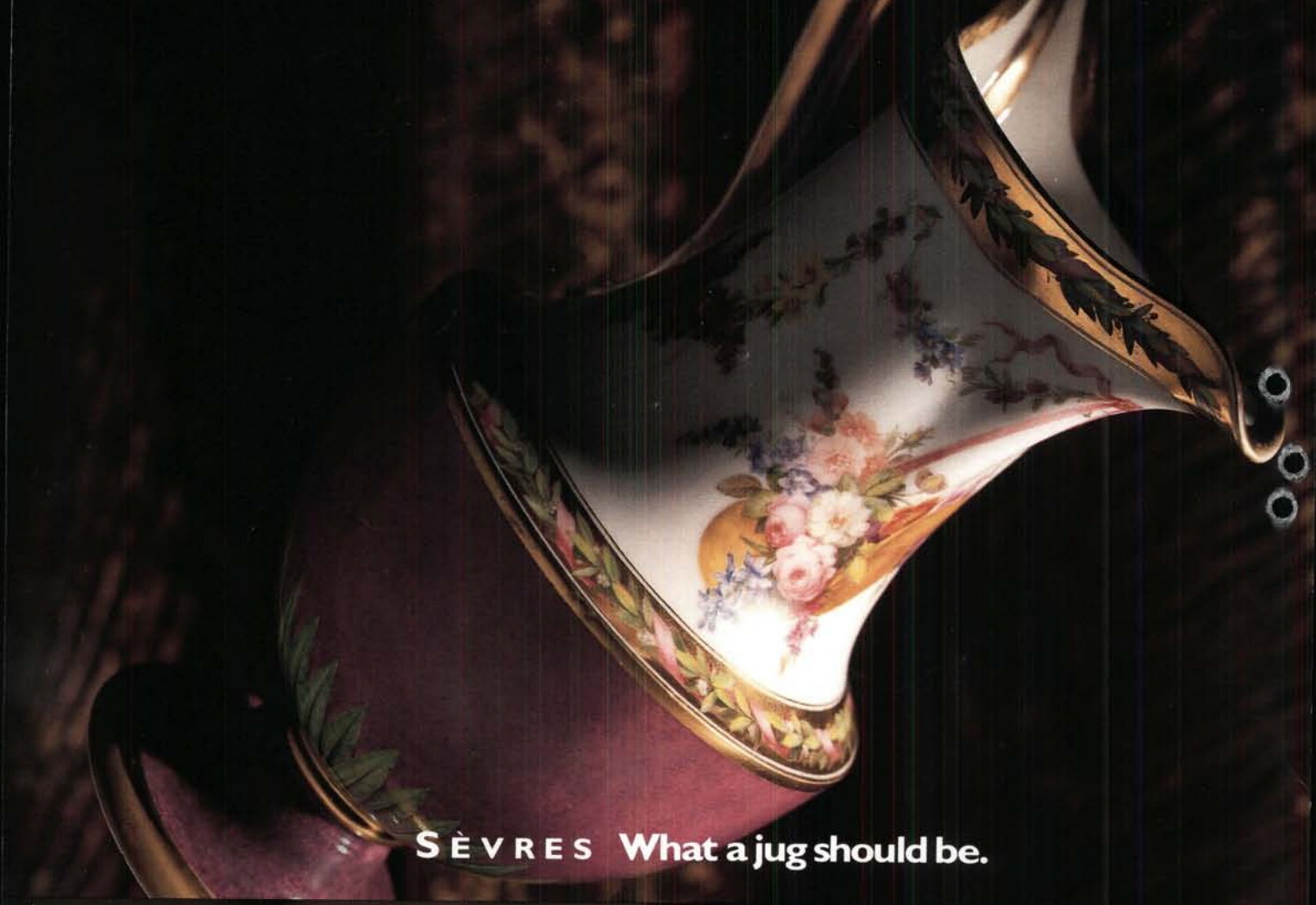

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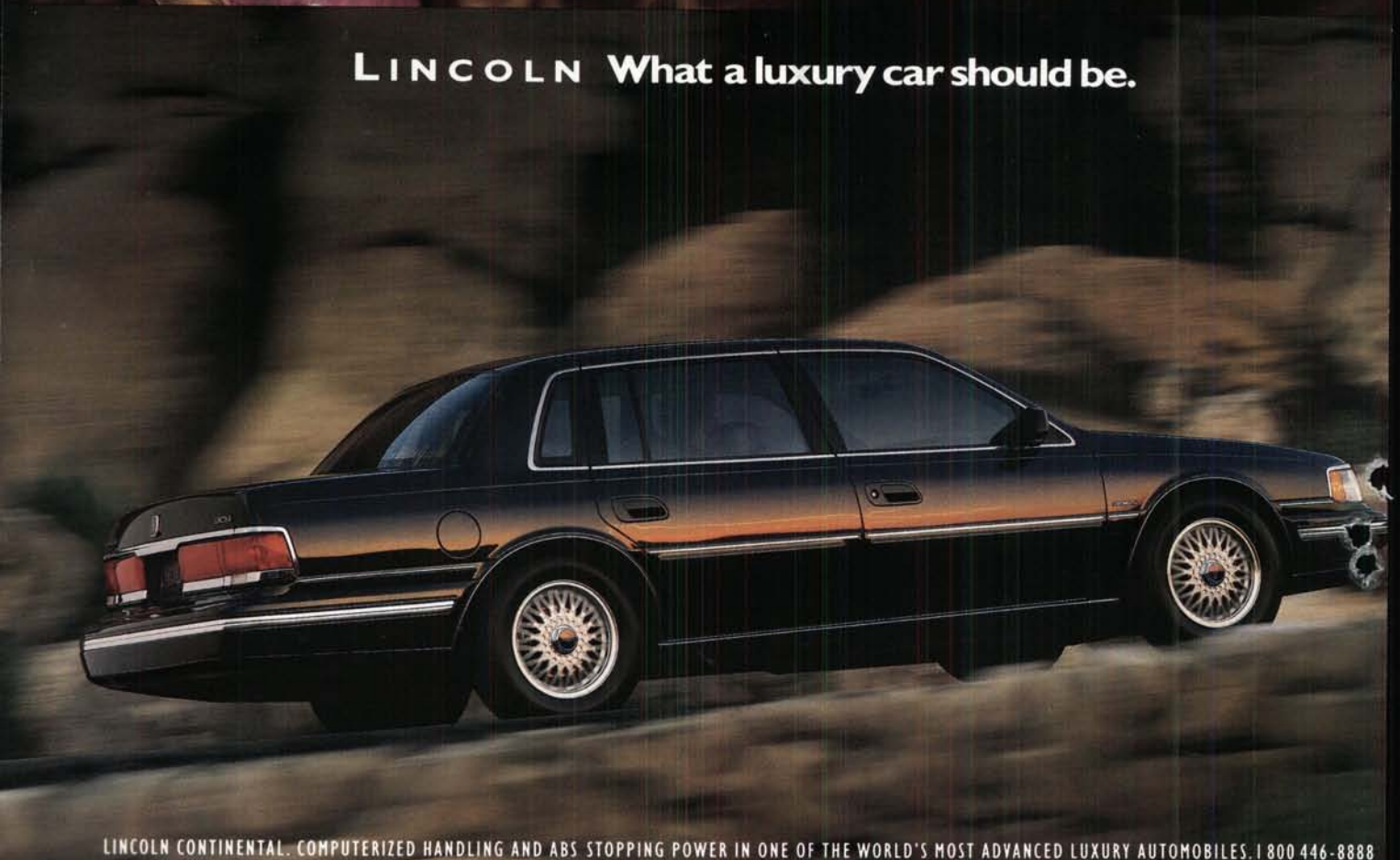

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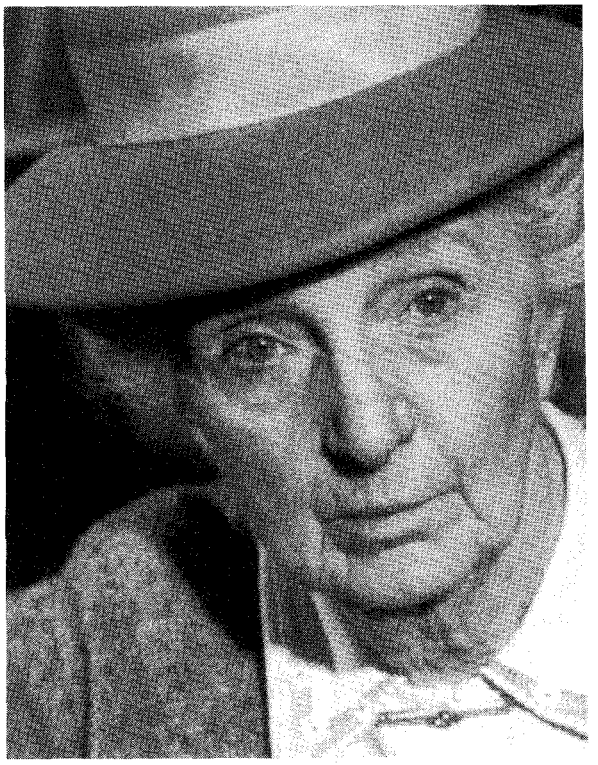

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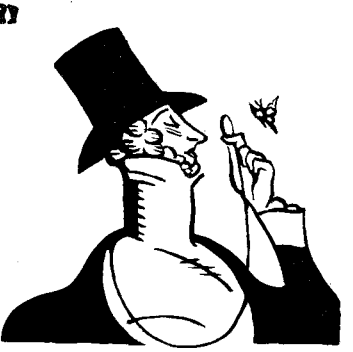

THE NEW YORKER

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

MAMBO: "a ballroom dance of Cuban origin that resembles the rumba and the cha-cha." Mambo: the first word in a splatter of hit platters from the fifties, by, among others, Ruth Brown, Rosemary Clooney, Bill Haley, and Perez Prado and his orchestra, and now the first word in the title of a performance piece—"Mambo Mouth"—at the American Place Theatre (111 West 46th Street). The embodiment of the title, John Leguizamo, is a twenty-six-year-old, of Colombian background, who resembles some Warner Brothers actor you can't quite remember. His accent in each of the seven segments of his act may be Puerto Rican or Peruvian, corporate or street—it all depends on which one of his Hispanic characters is speaking. There's Loco Louie, whose clothing is red and yellow but whose language—like that of most everyone in Leguizamo's gallery—is blue. And Manny, a "malicious and delicious" transvestite prostitute, whose retorts are prouder: "If it wasn't for a Spanish woman," he hurls at a disappearing customer, "Columbus wouldn't have discovered America." And the alcoholic, book-peddling Inca Prince, whose gambits to passersby are the most informed of all: Shakespeare, he says, was one-quarter Spanish, and the author of "The Merchant of Venezuela." The quality of Leguizamo, who has been a Puck at the Public, is not restrain'd.

Except in the final sketch, where he plays the Crossover King. In his quest for success, this huckster in banker drag—Savile Row suit, Sulka tie, Vuarnet specs—has skipped the assimilated American stage and gone right for the booty: Japanese ways. He conducts seminars to show fellow-Latinos how to clean up their acts: how to rid themselves of gold jewelry and too tight jeans and unnatural hair colors. The Crossover King can't shake his own roots, however; rhythms from his background keep bubbling up. It's as if all the voices that the gifted Leguizamo had unleashed in his first segment, where he plays the host of a TV call-in show, had returned to harry him. The talk-show host, Agamemnon, is Cuban: Mambo Mouth is colorful, but he's also faithful to origins.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

ASSASSINS—Stephen Sondheim's new musical, with a book by John Weidman; directed by Jerry Zaks. The cast includes Jace Alexander, Victor Garber, Annie Golden, Jonathan Hadary, Terrence Mann, and Debra Monk. Previews through Jan. 26. Opens Jan. 27 at 7. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

DEAD MOTHER, OR SHIRLEY NOT ALL IN VAIN—A new comedy written and directed by, and featuring, David Greenspan. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

EARTH AND SKY—A play by Douglas Post, which was directed by André Ernotte. Jennifer Van Dyck and Justin Deas lead the nine-member cast. In previews. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Akosua Busia, Kenny Neal, and Eric Ware in "Mule Bone"

HENRY IV, PARTS I AND II—The sixteenth and seventeenth plays in the Public's Shakespeare Marathon, both directed by JoAnne Akalaitis, will run in repertory through March 31. Part I begins previews on Jan. 22, and Part II begins previews on Jan. 23. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

IN MIAMI AS IT IS IN HEAVEN—A play by Raul de Cárdenas. Three performances a week are in English, and four are in Spanish. Preview on Jan. 23. Opens Jan. 24 at 8. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

MULE BONE—The première of a never-produced 1930 collaboration between Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes. Directed by Michael Schultz. In previews. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

THE MY HOUSE PLAY—A comedy by Wendy MacLeod. With Jayce Bartok, Lewis J. Stadlen, Welker White, David Eigenberg, Kathryn Erbe, and Leslie Lyles. Previews through Jan. 29. Opens Jan. 30 at 8. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

ROMEO AND JULIET—Mark Neibuhr is the former and Miriam Healy-Louie is the latter in this production by Theatre for a New Audience. Bill Alexander directed. Previews through Jan. 26. Opens Jan. 27 at 8. (Victory, 209 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

WHEN LIGHTNING STRIKES TWICE—A double bill of plays by H. M. Koutoukas: "Awful People Are Coming Over So We Must Be Pretending to Be Hard at Work and Hope They Will Go Away" and "Only a Countess May Dance When She's Crazy." Previews Jan. 22-23. Opens Jan. 24 at 8. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

RECENTLY OPENED

BETTER DAYS—A play by Richard Dresser, presented by the Primary Stages theatre company. (45th Street Theatre, 354 W. 45th St. 333-7471.)

BUDDY: THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY—Anyone who thinks that rock and roll lives on had better steer clear of this ersatz docu-musical about the life of Buddy Holly. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/19/90.) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

CAMILLE, A TEARJERKER—Everett Quinton and the late Charles Ludlam are both at their best in this revival of Mr. Ludlam's 1973 spoof, which gives Mr. Quinton a chance to "play the whore" on a grand scale. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

CARREÑO—A show based on the life of Teresa Carreño, the Venezuelan composer, pianist, conductor, and singer. Written and performed by Pamela Ross and directed by Gene Frankel. Most performances are in English; a few are in Spanish. (Intar, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

THE COUNTRY GIRL—A first-rate revival of the Odets play, with David Rasche as the bibulous star, Karen Allen as his steadfast wife, and Paul McCrane as the misguided director. (1/21/90) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Closes Feb. 10.)

THE DANCE OF DEATH—Strindberg's play, in a translation by Harry G. Carlson. With Joanne Camp, Richard Fancy, Janet Kingsley, and Paul O'Brien. (Pearl Theatre, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

DAUGHERTY & FIELD OFF-BROADWAY—The cabaret team of Bill Daugherty and Robin Field in a revue of swing and show tunes. (Double Image Theatre, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF—The Israeli actor Topol makes a commanding Tevye—the best of all of them—in this production, which falls somewhere between revival and facsimile. The songs are by Bock and Harnick; the dances and direction are re-created from the Jerome Robbins originals, and the costumes are from the Patricia Zipprodt originals. (12/3/90) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510.)

FOREVER PLAID—Stuart Ross's loving, tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. The performances of Jason Graae, Stan Chandler, David Engel, and Guy Stroman (as the Plaids, a close-harmony group snuffed out in the prime of life and brought back to earth for a single evening) are so deadpan, and the songs (arranged by James Raitt) are rendered at such a heightened pitch of musical good faith, that only from Ross's script and choreography would you know the thing is a parody. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)

GROWN UPS—A revival of Jules Feiffer's 1981 play. Presented by the American Jewish Theatre. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797. Closes Feb. 10.)

JACKIE MASON: BRAND NEW—The comedian brings his one-man show to Broadway again. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

JEAN COCTRAU REPERTORY—Presenting two plays in rotating repertory: Ibsen's WHEN WE DEAD AWAKEN and Cocteau's INFERNAL MACHINE. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

LYNDON—Laurence Luckinbill is L.B.J. in a play by James Prideaux, which is based on Merle Miller's 1980 biography of Johnson. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

MONSTER IN A BOX—Spalding Gray's latest autobiographical monologue. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Mondays and occasional Sundays, through Feb. 25.)

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score), which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE PIANO LESSON—August Wilson's newest drama, the fourth in his series chronicling the black-American experience in the twentieth century, is set in Pittsburgh, in 1936. In its exquisite writing and over-all structure (involving the conflict over a piano that figures hauntingly and intricately in one family's history) the play resembles "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" more than "Fences." Wilson takes refuge in an overly mystical and melodramatic ending, but there are some great scenes. Lloyd Richards was the director. (4/30/90) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Closes Jan. 27.)

PRELUDE TO A KISS—Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. (3/26/90) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.)

REMEMBRANCE—Aideen O'Kelly, Malachy McCourt, and John Finn in a play by Graham Reid. (Irish Arts Theatre, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

ROMEO AND JULIET—Robert Sean Leonard and Gerit Quealy star in this Riverside Shakespeare Company production, directed by Charles Keating. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes Jan. 27.)

SHADOWLANDS—William Nicholson's vulgar stage adaptation of the beautiful television

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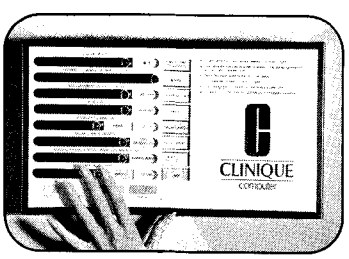

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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

film about C. S. Lewis that he wrote for the BBC is essentially a tourist trap. It Broadwayizes everything that in the movie was subtle or sincere. Directed by Elijah Moshinsky; with Nigel Hawthorne and Jane Alexander. (11/26/90) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099.)

Six Degrees of Separation—You're best off knowing nothing about the new John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. (6/25/90) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Smoke on the Mountain—This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray and performed by seven versatile actor-musicians, it re-creates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of more or less devout gospel singers have been invited to appear. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

The Sum of Us—David Stevens' poignant comedy about how hard it is for parents and children to break free of each other (particularly if they get on too well) is set in present-day Australia. Depending on how you look at it, the play is either very dear and rather flawed or rather dear and very flawed; but cast and direction are both excellent, and Tony Goldwyn is electrifying as a young homosexual who wishes his father weren't quite so laid back about his homosexuality. (11/5/90) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Taking Stock—Lee Wallace, George Guidall, and Stephen Singer in a comedy by Richard Schotter. Directed by Marilyn Chris. (Jewish Repertory Theatre, 344 E. 14th St. 505-2667. Closes Jan. 27.)

Those Were the Days—One could almost wish that this tribute to the Yiddish musical theatre, directed and choreographed by Eleanor Reissa, were less assimilated—stricter in its concept and selection (witness the title song, which has nothing to do with the Yiddish musical theatre). But the charming and adept performances of Bruce Adler, Robert Abelson, Mina Bern, and Lori Wilner, together with Zalmen Mlotek's klezmer music, make the show a joyful celebration of the shtetl culture, and put it among the very best of its kind. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302.)

York Theatre Company—Presenting a revival of **Philemon**, the 1970 musical by Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt. (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Closes Feb. 3.)

LONG RUNS

Aspects of Love: Andrew Lloyd Webber's latest extravaganza, based on David Garnett's frail 1955 novel of the same title, aspires to good taste and sophistication (it's about artists and theatre folk rather than cars or trains) but ends up being a monument to vulgarity. The combination of Garnett's triviality and Lloyd Webber's *pretentiousness produces* something so empty it implodes. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **Black and Blue:** An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while La Vern Baker, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **Cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **City of Angels:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular setting and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.) . . . **The Fantasticks:** The longest-running long run celebrated its thirtieth birthday last May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **A Few Good Men:** "Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series. Directed by Don Scardino. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes Jan. 26.) . . . **Forbidden Broadway 1991:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **Grand Hotel:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. With Rene Ceballos, David Carroll, Lynette Perry, Chip Zien, Timothy Jerome, John Wylie, and Caitlin Brown. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **Les Misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **Nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **Other People's Money:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. Starring Steven Keats and Priscilla Lopez. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **The Phantom of the Opera:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by the*atre that cares not a whit for words and* contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **The Rothschilds:** A revival of the 1970 musical by Jerry Bock (score), Sheldon Harnick (lyrics), and Sherman Yellen (book). With Mike Burstyn; directed by Lonny Price. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.)

DANCE

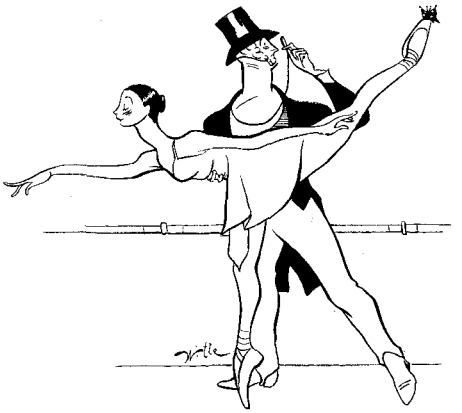
WE have watched many heart-stopping acrobats over the years, but none to rival the Flying Cranes, one of the starring acts with the current edition of the Moscow Circus, at Radio City Music Hall this week. If you read the story on them in a recent issue of the *Times Magazine*, you know that one of their foremost distinctions is their nerve. Currently, flier Pyotr Serdukov is working with catcher Vilen Golovko on perfecting the unlikely feat of five somersaults between the bar of a trapeze and the grasp of a partner's hands. This kind of physical star-trekking—daring to go where no man has gone before—seems to be a necessary component of greatness in any kind of physical endeavor, including the ballet. But what is necessary to advance the art is not always sufficient to make it theatrical: quintuple somersaults, quadruple Salchows, or entrechats-douze are not, per se, watchable. In fact, most people couldn't tally the championship numbers unless they were watching the moves in slow motion on a VCR.

As it happens, the Cranes are also skillful at putting an act together. Their choreography, set to famous orchestral music, is built on the theme of Soviet soldiers who fell defending their homeland in the Second World War, and images of bodies plummeting in free-fall to the safety net are as integral to the performance as is the roofward ascent of the aerialists—representing the liberated souls of the fallen—along a special pulley system. The result may sound a little gloomy, and it would be if all the different ways of soaring, dropping, and corkscrewing through the air didn't relate to a single idea of weight and weightlessness. In fact, the more fully the Cranes give in to gravity, the more freedom they seem to acquire visually. They embody much about the rise and fall and rise of modern dance.

New York City Ballet—Jan. 22 at 8: "Walpurgisnacht Ballet," "Robert Schumann's 'Davidsbündlertänze,' " and "Fearful Symmetries." . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 8: "Jewels." . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 8: "Le Tombeau de Couperin," "Four Gnossiennes," "Fearful Symmetries," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "Mozartiana," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 2: "Square Dance," "Prodigal Son," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 8: "Jewels." . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 1: "Le Tombeau de Couperin," "Pas de Deux," "Eight Easy Pieces," "Eight More," and "Chaconne." . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 7: "Jewels." . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at 8: "La Source," "Prodigal Son," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: "Swan Lake," "Ecstatic Orange," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 24.)

Matsuyama Ballet—A Japanese company in a one-week engagement. Jan. 22 at 7:30 and Jan. 23-24 at 8: "Mandala" (U.S. première). . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 8 and Jan. 27 at 3: "Giselle." (*City Center*, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

"Altogether Different"—Final performances of the series. Jan. 22 at 8: Mark Taylor & Friends in "Devotion," "Nine Tails," "Province," "Mortal Drift," and "Union Hall." . . . ¶ Jan. 23-24 at 8 and Jan. 26 at 2: Nina Wiener Dance Company in "Harmonic Landscapes," a full-length work. . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 8 and Jan. 27 at 7:30: Stephen Petronio



Company in "MiddleSex Gorge," "#3," "Simulacrum Reels," and "Surrender II." . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 8 and Jan. 27 at 2: Ruby Shang and Company, Dancers in "Yell Punk Dolls," a full-length work. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Feld Ballets/NY—Opening performances of a six-week engagement that will run through March 10. Jan. 29 at 7: "Intermezzo No. 1," "Ion" (première), "Common Ground" (première), and a demonstration/performance by students of the Feld's New Ballet School. (A benefit.) . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: "Consort," "Embraced Waltzes," and "Common Ground." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Desrosiers Dance Theatre—A Toronto-based company presents the U.S. première of "Incognito," an evening-length work. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Jan. 29 at 7:30 and Jan. 30 at 8. The engagement will continue through Feb. 3.)

Alice Farley—With a seven-member company, presenting "Black Water (Dancing Below the Sea)." (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Jan. 26-27 at 7:30. Through Feb. 10.)

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NIGHT LIFE

A QUICK calculation tells us that Hildegarde—whose given name is either The Original or The Incomparable, depending on whom you talk to—has been playing the piano for seventy-nine years. On February 3, she will open the Russian Tea Room's winter series with an act she calls "Live at 85." We recently attended a season preview at the Tea Room and heard Hildegarde sing Irving Berlin's "I Love a Piano." Although she was only onstage for ten minutes or so, she was so charming and chatty—so *fabulous*, to dip into cabaretspeak—that for a moment we couldn't remember the performers who had gone before her. (This was quite an accomplishment on Hildegarde's part: we'd heard Margaret Whiting, among others.) After Hildegarde left the stage, the only thing cabaret don Donald Smith could think to say was, "*So* good to hear young talent."

We occasionally use this space to do a let-us-count-the-ways take on performers of whom we are enamored, and we can think of no one more deserving of such ruminations than Hildegarde. So . . . We love the fact that Hildegarde first became a star because the King of Sweden swooned over her; that she loves luggage and white gloves; that she refers to her audiences as "my dear people"; that she has been known to preface her own piano solos by chirping, "Take it away, girl"; that once, upon taking the stage during a classy, star-studded bash, she got tangled up in a microphone cord and remarked, "I was around before these things were *invented*"; that, according to a newspaper report, an audience member once told her that her rose-colored chiffon dress was lovely and she replied, "I know. That's why I'm wearing it"; that the Pope awarded her the title Lady of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem; and that the Kentucky Legislature knighted her Honorary Kentucky Colonel. And, above all else, we love the fact that Hildegarde once eschewed retirement by saying, "Hildegarde was here yesterday. She is here today. She will be here tomorrow."

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The seven-string guitarist **JOHN PIZZARELLI, JR.**, is currently at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. Pizzarelli, who can often be heard around town trading solos with his father (and fellow-seven-stringer), Bucky, is leading a trio of his own; standards and out-of-the-way stuff can be found in their repertoire, and though they swing hard, they've got a light, cool touch. In addition to being a virtuosic soloist, Pizzarelli is a pleasing, silky-voiced crooner, and his wit keeps the show buoyant. Shows at nine-fifteen Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—It's everything a cabaret should be: sleek, elegant, intimate, and slightly decadent. It also offers something that other cabarets do not: tapas, which come from the Spanish restaurant adjoining the club. Currently, the Ballroom is offering an uncharacteristic program of Brazilian female vocalists. **TANIA ALVES** performs Jan. 22-26; **KENIA** is in on Jan. 27; and **MARGARETH MENEZES**, who opened for David Byrne on his 1989 "Rei Momo" tour, commences on Jan. 29.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This jazz club, which takes its name from a long-gone midtown pleasure dome that took its name from Charlie Parker, is currently the site of an alumni reunion. Among those who made time with Parker are **GARY BARTZ** (whose trio plays here through Jan. 24), **RED RODNEY** (whose quintet appears Jan. 25-26), and **EDDIE BURT** (whose quartet turns up on Jan. 27). Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is the place to find big-league jazz artists. It's an institution and it knows it: how many other clubs sell their own belt buckles? Guitarist **STANLEY JORDAN**, whose innovative, technique-laden playing often leads listeners to believe that they are hearing a duet, performs in a trio Jan. 22-27. Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. **MARTI JONES** and **DON DIXON** hold forth on Jan. 25, and the Uncle Floyd Show is here on Jan. 26. Shows every night at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors coöperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. A trio consisting of pianist **MICHAEL WEISS**, bassist **JAMES GENUS**, and drummer **LEWIS NASH** performs Jan. 22-26; pianist **RENEE ROSNES** leads a trio on Jan. 27; and saxophonist **CRAIG HANDY**, pianist **JOHN HICKS**, and bassist **DON PATE** start up on Jan. 28. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Mark's Place. (892-0370)—An unpretentious storefront café devoted to such things as Irish stew and the *Irish Times*. There's no stage per se, but bohemian musicians gather around a piano and work up some nice, wistful sets while bohemian patrons sit writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over one of the two varieties of beer sold here: Budweiser and Rolling Rock. Sin-é means "that's it" in Gaelic and is *not* Sinéad O'Connor's nickname. The café is a nice place to while away an hour, and you never know who'll turn up and tune up. Music generally begins at about eight-thirty.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET** is currently in the Café Carlyle. The quartet, which has been doing its fastidious swinging for more than thirty years and which has some four hundred pieces in its repertoire, tends to play in big halls these days, so its occasional layovers in this intimate space are to be treasured. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **FRANK OWENS** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CAT CLUB, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Every Sunday night, this club, usually dominated by heavy-metal fans, is ceded to a gang of Lindy Hop enthusiasts called the New York Swing Dance Society. The hoofers run the gamut from seasoned pros who could do the Lindy in their sleep to enthusiastic novices whose steps are more commonly seen in aerobics classes. The George Gee and Kevin Brown orchestra sets the pace on Jan. 27. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club, a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti, is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. On Jan. 24, the Neighborhoods perform; on Jan. 26, Surgery; on Jan. 29, Scuba Diva; and on Jan. 30 the Fortune Tellers. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—In the shadow of the Zeckendorf Towers sits this stucco-walled grotto, whose intimate scale makes it a fine spot for jazz. Pianist **RAY BRYANT** heads up a trio Jan. 22-27; a quartet belonging to saxophonist **GEORGE COLEMAN** begins work on Jan. 29. Music after nine.

DELTA 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—On the door one finds the word

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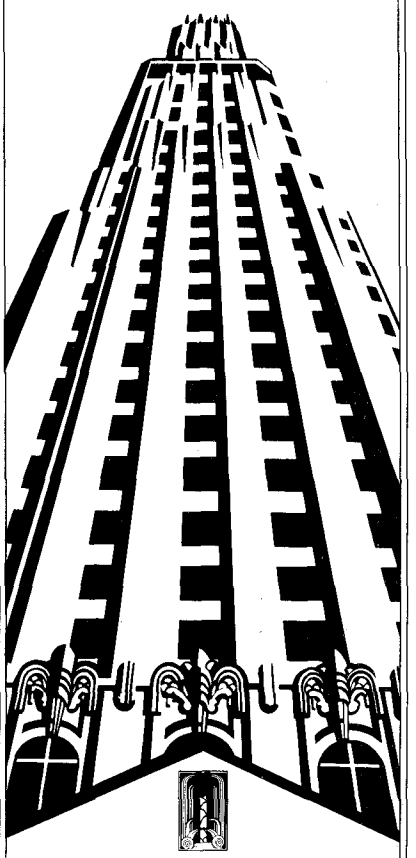
We've just spent $14,000,000 transforming the all-suite Beekman Tower Hotel to new heights of luxury, comfort and convenience. From our art deco lobby to spacious suites—it's all been beautifully redone. Plus we've added a health club, conference facilities and the new Zephyr Grill restaurant. Located one block from the United Nations. For reservations, call 1-800-ME-SUITE, ext. 194.



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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

"EAT"—a rather terse legend, to which the owners of this establishment might have added "LISTEN." Inside—past a narrow bar and a bunker of beer crates—the place opens up into a big, pleasant restaurant serving such things as chicken-fried steak and decorated with a giant Sunbeam sign and a whole lot of Southern detritus. A man wearing a rust-colored velour shirt and a brown corduroy sports coat was recently sighted here eating dinner and holding forth about the genius of Marvin Gaye. Most nights, the entertainment is on the bandstand, beginning at nine.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—An Irish bar, way out on the Western edge of town, where the great potholed boulevards turn to cobblestones, and the world across the Hudson flashes its come-hither signs. The back room has Hibernian sounds on Fridays and bluegrass on Saturdays. On Jan. 25, Francis O'Connor, from County Limerick, plays jigs and reels on fiddle and flute. Jan. 26 features a country "pickin' party" jam session. Sets at nine and eleven.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through the iffy-looking side door, down the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors and corrugated tin, and down a short flight of stairs you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. Bassist **RON CARTER** leads a quintet through Jan. 27; the **JOE HENDERSON** quartet starts a week-long gig on Jan. 29. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—With jazz you get eggroll. At this posh-looking two-floor Chinese restaurant, tucked into a midtown skyscraper, you'll find a lot of business people and a lot of hanging plants. In the middle of the main dining room you'll also find pianist-singer **DARYL SHERMAN** and bassist **LEON (BOOTS) MALESON** Jan. 22-26, with different guests every day: tenor-sax player **LOREN SCHOENBERG** on Jan. 23; guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and saxophonist **BILL KIRCHNER** on Jan. 24; guitarist **JAMES CHIRILLO** on Jan. 25; and trumpeter **DICK SUDHALTER** on Jan. 26. Music from seven.

GONZALEZ Y GONZALEZ, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big—de rigueur for the lower-Broadway dining scene. The theme is, of course, Mexican, and you get the whole enchilada—a giant cactus here, a parade-float sombrero there, animal skulls, religious artifacts, and jalapeño clusters everywhere.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. Pianist **STEVE KUHN** and bassist **DAVID FINCK** work together Jan. 23-26; pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and bassist **CALVIN HILL** get under way on Jan. 30. Music from about nine-thirty.

LAUTERBACH'S BROOKLYN BEAT, 335 Prospect Ave., at Sixth Ave., Brooklyn. (1-718 788-9140)—A grungy but well-intentioned watering hole devoted to homegrown Brooklyn bands. The emphasis here is on exposed cement, although one wall is decorated with Polaroids—"St. Patty's 1986" (people in green hats and leis), "New Year's 1988-89" (people in red hats and leis). Lauterbach's microwave menu includes shepherd's pie and chicken parmigiana, but the musical menu is almost always a better bet.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A recent addition to the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. **LIL' ED AND THE BLUES IMPERIALS** perform on Jan. 24, and the **FINS** claim Jan. 25-26.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Manhattanites who stay through the second set will need all their Scout training to get home. The **FLESHTONES,** a chaotic, high-spirited party band, will do their rave-ups here on Jan. 26. Also on the bill are Date Bait and Friction Wheel.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and high-heeled ladies. Singer **SANDY STEWART** and her sons, **BILL** and **TOM CHARLAP,** can currently be found here, in a celebration of the hundreth anniversary of Cole Porter's birth. Dining. Closed Sundays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—It may look like a plain old steakhouse, and the photos on the walls may look like Sardi's leftovers, but in the back room you'll find swing bands, Dixieland combos, and couples sprung from the legacy of Fred and Ginger. **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS** time-travel to the nineteen-thirties every Tuesday; wearing natty tuxedos and seated behind felt-bannered music stands, they run through original arrangements by the likes of Hoagy Carmichael and Fletcher Henderson. Mondays belong to Howie Wyeth's ragtime trio, Wednesdays to Stan Rubin's band, Fridays to Rick Hardeman and His Basin Street Six, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine on Fridays and Saturdays.

SPO-DEE-O-DEE, 565 W. 23rd St. (206-1990)—A curious mixture of swank and down-home. (The name comes from the 1949 Stick McGhee song "Drinkin' Wine Spo-dee-o-dee," which was Atlantic Records' first hit.) The music is mostly R. & B., and the furnishings include ballroom-size chandeliers, king-size sofas, and green velvet drapes sprinkled with stardust.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—If you arrive late for a show at this celebrated shrine of jazz, you run the risk of being seated in the glass-enclosed terrace, which means you'll need a periscope to see the show and a parka to live through it. Otherwise, Sweet Basil is just the right environment for patrons—chiefly because it has a silence-or-else policy during shows. The **MANHATTAN JAZZ QUINTET** is here through Jan. 27, the **MITCH WATKINS** quartet performs on Jan. 29, and the **MARTY EHRLICH** quintet comes in on Jan. 30. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now directed by his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

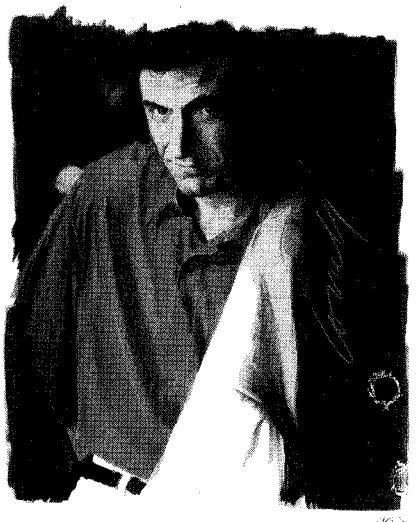
SWEETWATERS, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the tables, shrimp creole on the menu, and a sunken dance floor with a "Saturday Night Fever" ball. The stage, dominated by a grand piano, is usually given over to Latin and R. & B. acts. The schedule: Bobby Rodriguez on Jan. 23; Dee Dee Sharp Jan. 25-26; Conjunto Clásico on Jan. 27; and José Alberto on Jan. 30.

TIME CAFÉ, 380 Lafayette St., entrance on Great Jones St. (533-7000)—The café's subterranean jazz annex—located around the block on a chunk of real estate that's temporarily safe from the encroachment of Tower industries—is a newcomer to New York's night life. On the club's back wall one finds embarrassingly cheesy renderings of full-figured gals—the kind of artwork usually reserved for pinball machines. Otherwise, Time Café is an airy, convivial place with some comfy, diner-style booths, a fleet of IKEA-style tables and chairs, and jazz musicians on the bandstand every Friday and Saturday, beginning at ten.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room, which is as big and plain as a mess hall, the Cuban-born Latin-jazz clarinettist and saxophonist **PAQUITO D'RIVERA** performs Jan. 25-26, with guests **JON FADDIS, SLIDE HAMPTON,** and **CLAUDIO RODITI.** . . . ¶ Two flights up, at the Top of the Gate, bop pianist **TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI** and a big band led by her husband, **LEW TABACKIN,** heat up on Mondays. Music from nine.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history and a décor that's homey and faded, like an attic full of memorabilia. The **SHIRLEY HORN** trio is here Jan. 22-27. Ms. Horn, who lives in Washington, D.C., is a pianist whose technique has been compared to Ahmad Jamal's and a singer whose style has been likened to Billy Holiday's. Her New York début was at this club in 1962, alongside Miles Davis; she didn't perform in the city again until twenty years later, and has since then appeared infrequently. The **BOBBY WATSON** Horizon Quintet begins a week-long stay on Jan. 29. Mondays are reserved for the late Mel Lewis's big band. Music after ten.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad.



John Pizzarelli, Jr., at the Algonquin

ZANZIBAR & GRILL, 550 Third Ave., at 36th St. (779-0606)—A Murray Hill jazz resort, where the ceiling fans turn slowly, and the palm trees rustle tropically, and the jukebox contains Xavier Cugat and Perez Prado, and a waiter, delivering a plate of fried chicken and maple-pear corn bread to a customer, sings "It's suppertime" (to the tune of "Summertime"). The professional musicians tend to come on at around nine. **PETE LAVIN & CO.** are here Jan. 24-26, and the **ROY GERSON** Swing Septet works every Monday. Sets from around nine.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Pianist **JANICE FREIDMAN,** cornetist **WARREN VACHÉ,** and bassist **MURRAY WALL** hold sway Jan. 21-26. Pianist **LYNNE ARRIALE** and bassist **BOB CRANSHAW** start up on Jan. 28. Music from eight weeknights, and Sundays from seven.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

THIS past Wednesday—twenty-four hours after the Deadline and five hours after the first waves of F-15Es began strafing Baghdad—the streets of Manhattan looked more the way they do on a freezing Sunday night than at midnight on a normal "hump" day. During a zigzagging ride uptown, we passed Wetlands, the Cat Club, Nell's, Rex, Limelight, the Building, Tatou, and Au Bar. Not one of them had a soul waiting outside to get in. In fact, the entrance to the last, which is usually responsible for nightly tie-ups on Madison owing to its round-the-block taxi line, was yellow-cab free. The initial realization that this club's regulars could care about anything beside sitting next to Bret Easton Ellis was shocking, but then we remembered that the events we had just heard about on television had this place beat. Suddenly, it wasn't no party, it wasn't no disco, it wasn't no foolin' around.

There had been people out earlier. One bunch protested the war by blocking the traffic in Times Square. "Where the hell were you three months ago, when someone might have paid attention to you, and I wasn't in a rush?" yelled a driver in a stretch limo, as he flashed a two-fingered "V" and cut off two cabs to get

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through the mess. Several people were racing back to a Blockbuster Video store to see if they could get a refund on tapes they had rented for the evening. "I feel guilty watching 'Pretty Woman,'" said one girl holding a cassette. "Maybe we should exchange it for something appropriate." ("The Best Years of Our Lives"?) "Nah," she decided. "We should go home and watch CNN, huh?" Four people sitting at the normally bustling Les Halles (411 Park Avenue South) debated what strategic location the Iraqis would choose for their initial retaliation. The in-pure-be-true-to-your-school consensus: the New York subway system. One guy in this group even offered a solution to the conflict: "Give them Salman Rushdie." He got hit with a boudin noir. And, God bless 'em, hookers were still patrolling Lexington at 28th Street. "Hi, honey," one of them sang into our car. "This may be your last chance before they send me over to entertain the troops." We declined, explaining that we had to get home and listen to the reports. "I hear you, honey. Peace," she said. "Pray for peace. Bring the boys back home. It's much better for business." Among other things.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Ice Capades—With Barbie, Ken, and the Simpsons. (Madison Square Garden. Through Jan. 27. For information about show times and tickets, call 465-6000. . . . ¶ Meadowlands Arena. Jan. 29-Feb. 3. For information about show times and tickets, call 1-201 935-3900.)

Moscow Circus—One ring full of dancing bears, trapeze artists, jugglers, acrialists (the Flying Cranes), tightrope walkers, and other such antic performers. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. For information about show times and tickets, call 247-4777. Through Jan. 27.)

"The History of Pornography"—A performance work with video, music, dance, text, and slides, which was written and directed by Kevin Malony. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. Jan. 22-25 at 8, and Jan. 26 at 7 and 10. For reservations, call 924-0077.)

"Fire (Empty Your Closets if You Want No Fire)"—A one-woman performance by Bina Sharif. (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Jan. 24-27 at 8. Through Feb. 3.)

Harry Kipper—The performance artist, wearing a G-string and telling Bible stories with dolls. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Jan. 26 at 8:30.)

Barbie and Ken with the Ice Capades

ART

As New York's big fall homage to Mexico draws to a close, leaving us with the impression that Surrealism was the all-but-exclusive precinct of the Mexican anima—as quintessentially Mexican as, say, the chance encounter of a Toltec snake god and a Catholic martyr on the vertiginously baroque altar of a gilt-ridden Spanish-colonial church—we have come across a perfectly timed small show of American Surrealist drawings from the Whitney's permanent collection. Smartly curated by Klaus Kertess and on view in the museum's lobby gallery through April 7, the exhibition consists of twenty-nine more or less surrealistic works on paper made between the late nineteen-thirties and the recent past.

When we say American we don't exactly mean apple pie, yet compared with Salvador Dali, for instance, or with Frida Kahlo, this group of artists conjures visions that are neurotically introspective rather than theatrically perverse, and that even when sex-obsessed seem quite chaste. The first drawing in the show, a doodly sketch of a table floating among a bunch of color-labelled clouds, is by the expatriate Man Ray, and it suggests a link not only from René Magritte's mock-orderly vignettes to Andy Warhol's color-by-number pictures and to Richard Artschwager's strange visual acrostics but also a link from Surrealism in general to Pop and Conceptual art. Next comes a fast segue of drawings by figures, minor and major, of the New York School—from Gerome Kamrowski to Robert Motherwell, from Pavel Tchelitchew to Jackson Pollock—who were strongly influenced by European émigré artists of the Second World War era, as well as by the ever-fascinating John Graham, who is described here as an "encyclopedia of the occult." The aim of these New York School artists was to liberate Surrealism from any hint of narrative or illustration. Biomorphic abstraction was the outcome then. And though we are offered works by mavericks such as Lee Bontecou (whose tondo drawing is a cross between Oskar Schlemmer and "The Road Warrior") and the altogether maniacal Jess, biomorphic abstraction—vintage 1989, by Carroll Dunham—is the last note of this show.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The jaw-dropper in a show of nineteenth-century sculpture and decorative arts is a closet—"Armoire with Merovingian Motifs" (1867), to be precise. Designed by Jean Brandely, in collaboration with the cabinetmaker Charles-Guillaume Diehl and the sculptor Emmanuel Frémiet, this madly ornamented wardrobe conjures a scene of Frankish glory for nationalistic Second Empire France: the triumphal procession of the leader Merovech, perhaps after his victory over Attila the Hun. It is an unforgettable object, and among the wildest pieces of furniture in the museum's collection. Through Jan. 27. . . . ¶ Nine paintings and eleven works on paper by the German Romantic Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840). All of the works are from the Pushkin and the Hermitage, in the Soviet Union. Starts Jan. 23. . . . ¶ "Albrecht Dürer: The Apocalypse" presents fifteen woodcuts of apocalyptic catastrophes, along with a small number of Gothic and Renaissance prints. Through March 17. . . . ¶ Photographs from the fifties and sixties, selected from the museum's collection. Among the artists shown are William Klein, Helen Levitt, Bill Brandt, and Lisette Model. Through March 17. . . . ¶ More than two hundred American portrait miniatures, most of them in watercolor on ivory, and none larger than six inches in size. Among the immortalized sitters are George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Abraham Lincoln. Through Feb. 10. . . . ¶ Seventeen Dutch-style cupboards crafted in New York and New Jersey between 1650 and 1800. . . . ¶ "Sacred Mountains in Chinese Art." Starts Jan. 25. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The museum's third "Artist's Choice" exhibition consists of a hundred and seventy portraits in various mediums, selected by Chuck Close. Through March 19. . . . ¶ An installation by Dennis Adams that includes documentary photographs of the museum's 1942 photography exhibition "Road to Victory." Through Feb. 28. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn, 1991.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Sixty paintings, sculptures, and prints from the nineteen-eighties, including work by Jasper Johns, Barbara Kruger, Susan Rothenberg, and David Salle. Through March 24. . . . ¶ A smaller selection, in the lobby, of thirty Surrealist and Surrealist-inspired drawings. . . . ¶ "Robert Rauschenberg: The Silk Screen Paintings, 1962-64." Half of the nearly eighty silk-screen paintings the artist made during the early sixties are on view, and their energy is intense. These paintings are striking because not only do they chronicle the spirit of their time with amalgamations of machine-produced media images—Rauschenberg's Kennedy is as much an icon as Warhol's Marilyn—but they are also chockablock full of glorious brushwork. Through March 17. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A lobby installation by Reeva Potoff that includes, among other elements, pages of the 1911 Encyclopaedia Britannica arranged in a cone that reaches to the ceiling. . . . ¶ Forty works of art from Oceania (mostly from the Sepik and Ramu river basins in New Guinea), including three-inch-long fishhooks, three monumental carved-wood "guardians," and a skull rack made of palm and bamboo. Through Feb. 4. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"Romance of the Taj Mahal," an exhibition of paintings, drawings, carpets, jewelry, and other items relating to the grand "jewel" in the crown of India. Included is the extraordinarily carved Taj Mahal Emerald, from the Mogul period, in which the palace was built. Through March 17. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A show of pamphlets, posters, propaganda leaflets, invasion maps, personal letters, and official speeches produced during the Second World War. One display juxtaposes two letters sent home to wives after the launching of D Day: one from Eisenhower, hopeful and optimistic, the other from Rommel, who wrote, "The enemy's superiority in nearly all regards is overwhelming." Through March 2. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—The museum, in residence at the New-York Historical Society until December, 1992, has reopened with an exhibition of a hundred sculptures and thirty-one drawings by Jacques Lipchitz. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 3.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Be Merry & Wise" examines the development of children's books in England from the seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth. Among the many books, manuscripts, and drawings on view are the "History of Tom Thumbe" (1621, the first English folktale in print), Dorothy Kilner's "The Life and Perambula-

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ART–Cont'd

tion of a Mouse" (1783), and the third edition of Edward Lear's "Book of Nonsense" (1861). Through Feb. 3. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Drawings and watercolors by the British Romantic Henry Fuseli (1741-1825). Through March 24. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"Rhetorical Image." An impressively ambitious exhibition that brings together artists of different generations from Eastern and Western Europe, North America, Brazil, and Japan. The premise of the show is that the art in all its diversity was created as a means of resistance to accepted expressions of power. The curator, Milena Kalinovska, favors some of today's more full-bodied political art, the kinds that have a strong sense of poetry and are thus not trapped by their own ideologies. But somehow the work doesn't look very good here. For example, both Lothar Baumgarten's impeccably designed word installation—about Native Americans and the railroads that displaced them—and Lawrence Weiner's equally exquisite wordwork, which have always shone in distinctive architectural settings, are here somewhat diminished by their arbitrary placement. Even so, the exhibition and its catalogue are worth the effort if only for the cross-pollination they encourage. Through Feb. 3. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—*"On Paper"* examines the history of papermaking, from its invention in China through John Cage's edible paper. Through March 2. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ Manuscript fragments, letters, first editions, photographs, and illustrations are all part of "Charles Dickens: His Life and Work." (Berg Collection. Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

George McNeil / Fairfield Porter (1907-75)—The much maligned city of New York is the subject of some celebration in both of these artists' work. However, McNeil's noisy, heraldic evocations of, for instance, Canal Street and LaGuardia Airport are cheery without being especially joyful and busy-looking without being particularly insightful or funny. / Porter's one painting of a city street, in milky-gray tones, is dreamily poetic. The other works, leisurely visions of Maine or Long Island, are also a sort of visual balm. Through Feb. 2. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

Short List—Thomas Hart Benton, Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (through March 2); **Gregory Gillespie,** Forum, Madison Ave. at 79th St. (through March 2); **Brice Marden,** Gagosian, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (through March 16); **Stephen Pace,** Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St. (through Feb. 23); **Donald Sultan,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Feb. 9).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

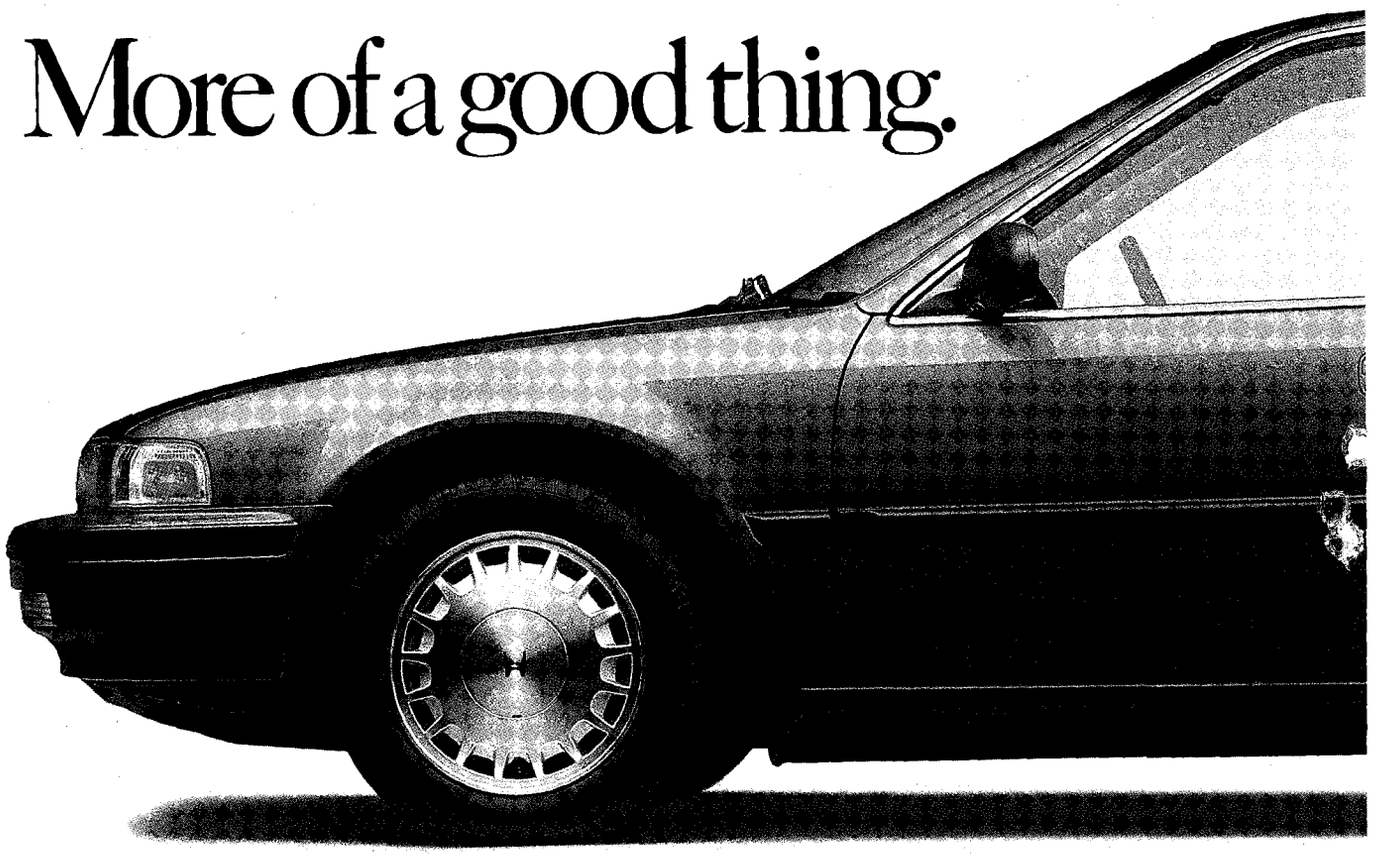
Lee Krasner (1908-84)—A gorgeous show of paintings from the second half of the sixties. This first-generation Abstract Expresssionist reached her unstoppable stride at a time when Pop and minimalism reigned supreme, after most of her male counterparts had died. Chief among the works here is "Combat," an explosion of pink and orange, with wonderful arcing rhythms, that is at once balletic and fierce. "Portrait in Green" could be an homage to Kandinsky, though it's unmistakably Krasnerian, while "Kufic" is in harmony with the pre-Ab-Ex surreal mysticism of Pollock and Gottlieb. Through Jan. 26. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Short List—Charles Biederman, Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Jan. 30); **Richard Chiriani,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 20); **Grace Hartigan,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 9); **Hans Hoffman** (through Jan 26) and **Alexander Liberman** (through Feb. 2), Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.; **Frederick Kiesler** and **Leonard Stokes,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 2); **David Krueger,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through Jan. 31); **Cheryl Laemmle,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 2); **James Moore,** Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Feb. 2); **Hugh O'Donnell,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Feb. 2); **Joseph B. O'Sickey,** Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 2); **Rolph Scarlett,** Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 6); **Frederic Matys Thursz,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 9).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Bo Bartlett—Traditional realism with a weird, forced twist, by a painter whom the actor-turned-art-historian Dennis Hopper dubs "a "great American artist of classical proportions" in the show's catalogue. One painting depicts a group of working-class guys in the mud in various stages of undress after what may have been sex tinged with violence. Another, entitled "God," is a very large, forceful depiction of a black man wrapped in a tattered patchwork quilt. There is a certain soul to this work, but it tends to be negated by a greater dose of pretension. When the artist attempts to lace his narratives with Tanseyian conceits, he falls flat on his face. Through Jan. 26. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway.)

Janet Carkeek / Jim Isermann—Since the time of Pop and minimalism, many have grouped contemporary art under the rubric of the Aesthetics of Boredom. The phrase is given new, depressed meaning with these paintings. The more compelling—if such a word is applicable here—look like all-over gestural paintings of the expressionless sort, with various colors, in both light and dark palettes, painted onto cheap strand board. / Sophomoric paintings—actually half paint and half hooked rug—of simple sixties Op compositions, a type of work that is really tired now. Through Feb. 2. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)



The style and performance of the Accord. Plus the spaciousness of a wagon, a more powerful engine, a

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CATCHALL

The nets now encircling the sixth-floor setback of the Empire State Building are not evidence of a giant spider; they're in place while workers waterproof the skyscraper's windows and limestone mortar joints. This safety system, designed specifically for the renovation project and consisting of a heavy, wide-mesh net supported by a lighter, fine-mesh net, protects pedestrians from falling debris.

"Unlike normal sidewalk-shed scaffolding," Charles Guigno, director of the building's operations, says, "the nets do not inhibit sidewalk traffic, and therefore do not adversely affect the merchants in the building." The system is also designed to prevent crime often associated with scaffolding. But such nets are not likely to become standard construction gear: they must be designed individually for each particular building, and their cost can be prohibitive. Their effectiveness, however, is not in doubt: they can support up to three hundred pounds per square foot—easily enough to catch a falling worker. Mr. Guigno is quick to point out that this is not their primary purpose, but one cannot help imagining the project's workers as high-flying acrobats performing in the city's center ring.

Alan Charlton—A mature British painter, little known here, who must be the most rigid of the minimalists: he makes Carl Andre and Sol LeWitt look impulsive. The show is a physically overwhelming installation of fifty-eight gray, markless panels of identical size and demeanor, differentiated only by their shade, which changes from one wall to the next. The canvases are hung close together and snake around the room, like a filmic sequence of nothingness. They possess both the sense of mechanization for which some have criticized Reinhardt and the workman-like marking that Ryman claims as his preferred method, but they offer little more. These paintings have been emptied of soul and poetry, and the loss is lamentable. Through Feb. 2. (Louver, 130 Prince St.)

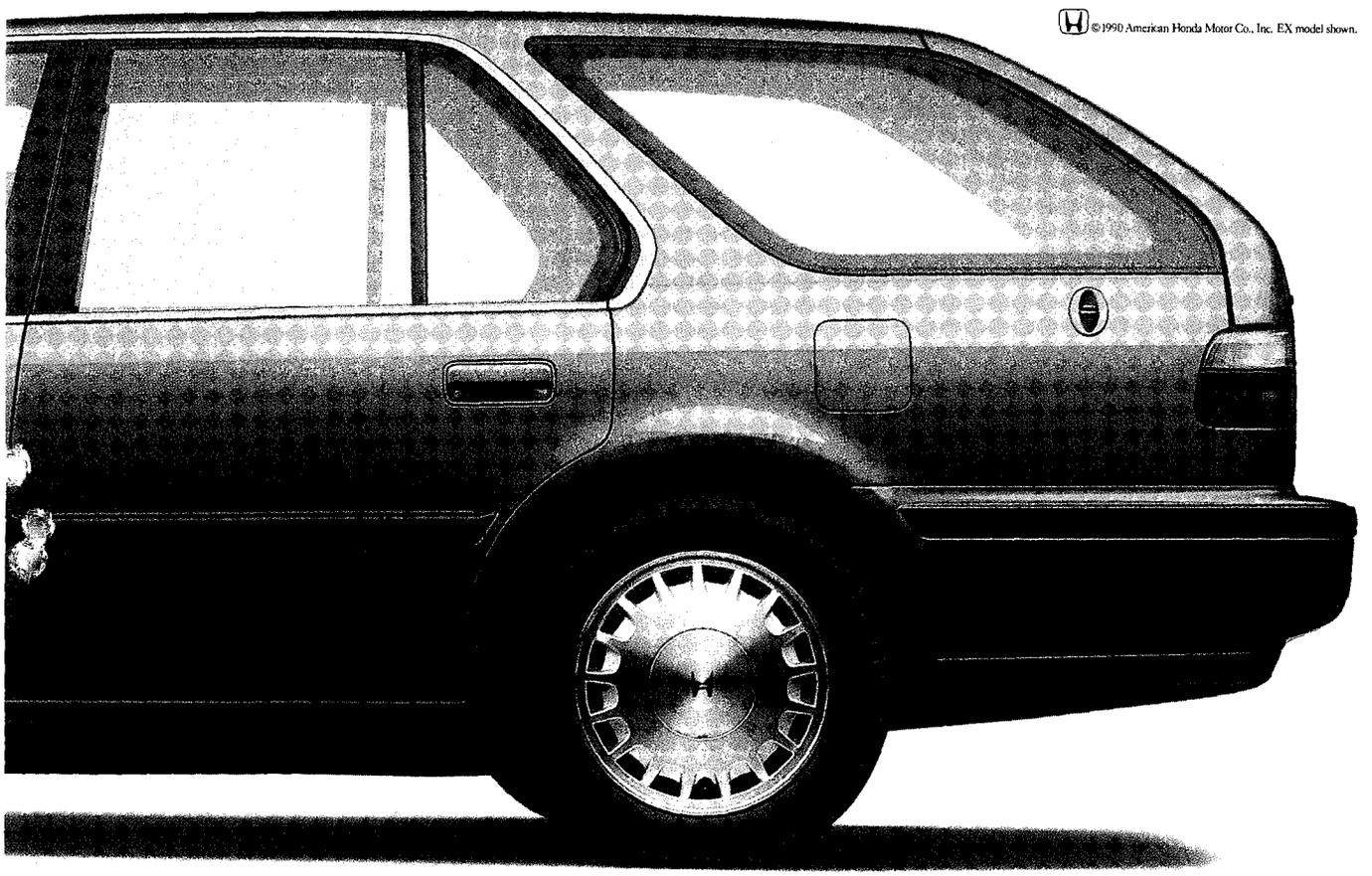
Jeffrey Dennis—A marvellously acculturated artist and a most apt poet of the urban condition. Dennis structures his paintings as montages, a little like the way David Salle used to. In the large, six-panel "Heartwood," we find a pea-green motif as a color field and a number of small vignettes, which include a country landscape; the kind of exurban highway scene that has begun to remind us of ruins in Rome; a guy with a Coke bottle sitting in a shack next to a toilet; and another guy, squatting, whose manual activity is cause for some doubt. Through Jan. 26. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

Gianni Dessì—Small, intense, biomorphic abstractions, by Italy's answer to Bill Jensen. The recurrent imagery centers on an almond shape, which appears variously as a cocoon, a body, a pit, and an eye, but which usually evokes a dark, vaginal presence. The artist has a great feel for paint and a gift for lending decorative colors poignancy. Occasionally, the works have an O'Keeffian light-over-the-plain intensity, but they often become choked by their overly refined romanticism. Through Feb. 2. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Barbara Kruger—For at least a decade, Kruger, more than almost any other artist, has remained committed to a consistent style and statement. But in her current show she takes her usual fashion-mag graphic style and completely inverts the message. Whereas Kruger's past work was cajoling in its mood and seductive in its design, this overwhelming, objectless new installation dares and inflames. The Boone gallery has been transformed into a war zone of large-scale red, white, and black graphics; even the floor and ceiling have been painted red with white texts atop them. Such sayings as "All Violence Is the Illustration of a Pathetic Stereotype" appear in huge letters against a sea of offensive slang names. In the past, Kruger, with a great dose of irony, has played off the phrase "It's our pleasure to serve you"; here the work literally says "It's Our Pleasure to Disgust You." There are large photographic images everywhere—a naked, crucified woman wearing a gas mask, for instance—but now they have become the background, while the words have become the images. "All That Seemed Beneath You Is Speaking to You Now," Kruger tells us, while presenting life as if it were taking place inside a pressure cooker laced with a heavy dose of the sinister. Through Jan. 26. (417 West Broadway.)

Matthew McCaslin—1970 is back, and McCaslin establishes himself as part of the scatter revival with this series of sculptures made of electrical conduits, industrial sockets, porcelain outlets and bare bulbs, and orange extension cords, and with a floor littered with the leftover packing material. The result is Barry Le Va updated, or Cady Noland without narrative. Through Feb. 2. (Newburg, 580 Broadway.)

John Murphy—Two shows constitute the New York début of a fine British artist who seems aligned with the poetics of Ian Hamilton Finlay, Hamish Fulton, and Richard Long. The centerpiece at Weber (142 Greene St.) is a work consisting of five monochrome canvases, each with a vowel somewhat camouflaged in its center. Although the work may sound trite, in the flesh it is very beautiful, suffering, perhaps, only from preciousness. The mottled monochrome fields—ranging from a creamy white for "E" to a deep



iver's side airbag. Seems one good thing does lead to another. The Accord Wagon HONDA

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

lavender for "O"—are actually composed of several tones, which in consort create seas of subtle vibrations. "Meaning Coagulated on the Flank of the Bear (Ursa Major)," a large, stippled black painting with a shiny surface and starlike dots, is quite magical. At Burgin (130 Prince St.), there are more celestial paintings and a funny photopiece about romance and colonialism. Both shows through Jan. 26.

Eric Orr—This Southern California comrade of James Turrell and Robert Irwin is caught between dazzling pyrotechnics (sometimes quite literally) and ultraslick art production. The show begins with a modest yet magical work: a rectangle of blue light that floats in the center of an otherwise blank wall and seems both dimensionless and of immeasurable depth. In the center of the exhibition proper is a black granite box that shoots a startling and magnificent torch of spiralling flame high into the air (it may or may not be on when you visit). Also on view is one of the artist's contemplative fountains, a striated vertical column with water cascading in mesmerizing streams like beads of mercury. In their intense, shaded light, however, the paintings and assemblages in the exhibit are at best Rothkoesque; they tend to be overly showy, distracting from the artist's gift for humble, or at times humbling, wonderment. Through Feb. 2. (Baghoomian, 555 Broadway.)

Jeff Perrone—In quite a switch from his last exhibition, this artist/critic is now making small, exquisitely crafted ceramic plaques featuring details from Indian and Persian miniatures, closeups of various kinds of Islamic and harlequin patterns, and occasional Matissean compositions and unattributed quotations, such as "exoticism triumphs over uniformity." In some of the plaques, particularly those with the simplest patterns, the glaze colors have been applied with the touch of a fine painter. But too much effort has been given to trying to make the curled-edge, shardlike plaques look like art: their grouping into geometric shapes, for instance, seems arbitrary and distracts from the artist's refined hand. Through Feb. 23. (Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St.)

Group Shows—At **the drawing center**, 35 Wooster St.: In this exhibition, which is only marginally better than the usual "Selections" shows at this gallery, most of the work suffers from a lack of distinctiveness. Although much of it has a definite political bent, it has no resonance. Bruno Jakob, for example, reaches for statement and comes up with nothing. His "Invisible Drawings," formed by applying plain water to paper to create no more than some listless wrinkles, have such saccharine and possibly ironic titles as "Seven Years of Sunshine." But the show does include the very sensitive watercolors of John Larabee. These consist of nippled forms, like pillows and balloons, that the artist seems to have captured from the vaporousness of air. Through Feb. 16. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **lorence-monk**, 568 Broadway: Karin DiGia, executive director of Children in Crisis, has got the most unlikely assortment of artists to decorate store-bought rocking horses that will be sold to benefit that organization, which tracks down missing children. As a concept for an art exhibition it may sound a tad silly, but the installation is striking—better-looking, in fact, than much contemporary installation art. Rocking horses decorated by John Chamberlain, Elizabeth Murray, and Sol LeWitt don't look anything like what you'd expect, while those by Jenny Holzer (with truisms) and the designer Betsey Johnson (with ponytail and tutu) do. Where else could you find a decorative item hand-painted by the diehard Conceptualist Lawrence Weiner? A number of the horses are endearingly, adoptably ugly, and at least two—by Mike Glier and Kim Jones—would be interesting in any context. Through Feb. 2.

Short List—**siah armajani**, Protetch, 560 Broadway (through Feb. 16); **jennifer bartlett**, Cooper, 149 Wooster St. (through Feb. 2); **robert bordo**, Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through Feb. 2); **chryssa**, Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through Feb. 9); **robert colescott** and **richard hull**, Kind, 136 Greene St. (through Feb. 13); **hanne darboven**, Castelli, 578 Broadway (through Feb. 9); **duncan hannah**, Cowles, 420 West Broadway (through Jan. 26); **keith haring** and **jean-michel basquiat**, Shafrazi, 130 Prince St. (through Feb. 9); **susan hiller**, Hearn, 39 Wooster St., and Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. (through Feb. 2); **alfred jensen**, Pace, 142 Greene St. (through Feb. 23); **komar & melamid**, Feldman, 31 Mercer St. (through Feb. 16); **mary lucier**, Greenberg Wilson, 560 Broadway (through Feb. 23); **john salt**, O. K. Harris, 383 West Broadway (through Feb. 2); **margo sawyer**, Toll, 146 Greene St. (through Feb. 9); **adam simon**, Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through Feb. 9); **frank stella**, 65 Thompson Street Gallery (through Jan. 26); **michael venezia**, RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway (through Feb. 9); **ellen wiener**, Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through Jan. 26).

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	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Barbara Kruger

OTHER GALLERIES

David Hammons—A wonderful show, at P.S. 1, of works made over the past twenty years by this extraordinary, no-longer-overlooked artist. Included are a new installation called "Jesus Is the Light," in which tiny crucifixes dangling from the ceiling glow in the dark, accompanied by a soul-cleansing Aretha Franklin tape; the controversial 1986 billboard painting, "How You Like Me Now," of a bleached, blonded, and blue-eyed Jesse Jackson; a large tapestry, titled "Flying Carpet," that is covered with actual fried-chicken parts and reminded us of work by other contemporary orchestrators of culture's debris, most notably Cady Noland and the Belgian Guillaume Bijl; two 1990 sculptures, titled "Rocky" and "Esquire," made of plant stands with head-shaped stones adorned with honest-to-God Afro-American hair; and a spectacular series of rafters-high basketball-hoop constructions. Through Feb. 10. . . . ¶ The rest of this contemporary-arts institution, perhaps the only one in town to inspire a sense of aesthetic adventurousness, is also in great, full form right now. In addition to the Hammons retrospective, you will find an exhibition, curated by Zdenka Gabalova, titled "Three Artists from Bohemia," with work by Thomas Ruller (a cross between endurance, installation, and body art), Ivan Kafka (metaphysical neo-Dada sculptures), and the especially talented Vladimir Kokolia, whose wallful of Expressionist-symbolist drawings are not to be missed. The basement and attic of this big, funky building have been given over to various site-specific works. In the attic, which is really rickety, are a series of sharply realized and gently confrontational installations by Maura Sheehan, Kim Jones, Renee Green, Patrick Ireland, and Lawrence Weiner. Through Feb. 10. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

A SURVEY of photographs taken by Judith Joy Ross over the past decade will be at the James Danziger gallery (415 West Broadway) until February 16. Ross works with an old-fashioned 8 x 10 view camera, and develops her pictures on what the exhibition catalogue calls "printing-out paper," but what she comes up with is decidedly contemporary. Her subjects range from kids in a park to people visiting the Vietnam War Memorial, from congressional staff members to youths in Easton, Pennsylvania. Most recently, she has taken pictures of men and women in the Army Reserve who were about to be sent to Saudi Arabia. Hers is the kind of vision that used to be called "proletarian." It's also deeply soulful. Ross has said her work is about vulnerability, and there's so much of that quality in her pictures that it affects your mood. You may go into the gallery with your defenses up for the day, but the show will take care of them: Ross's photographs, like nobody else's, make you aware of the butterflies in your stomach.

Short List—**lewis baltz**, Castelli, 578 Broadway (through Feb. 9); **harold edgerton** and **helen levitt**, Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Feb. 2); **ruzzie green**, Photofind, 138 Spring St. (through Feb. 16); **lisette model**, Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway (through Feb. 16); **raymond voinquel**, Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (through Jan. 26).

MUSIC

ON January 27, the Mozart Bicentennial at Lincoln Center begins in earnest, with a program personally selected by the composer. This sort of thing—reëmploying, in honor of some anniversary, an entire concert sequence devised for a long-ago occasion and a long-dead roster of performers—has been done before. We offer the bicentennialists the warning that these affairs can fall flat (we have heard it happen), but, Mozart having done his job well in 1783, Sunday's program looks pretty good: the "Haffner" Symphony to begin and end (symphonies were habitually divided in public concerts in those days); two piano concertos; three superb arias and one good one; part of the "Posthorn" Serenade; and a pair of solo piano works. Only one of the included items is based on a guess: Mozart's description of the concert mentions "a short fugue" for solo piano ("since the Emperor was there"), without saying which. Everything else is specifically identified.

The thought arises that concert programs might be held to constitute a genre of composition or super-composition in their own right; perhaps the program itself should be awarded a Köchel number. We also know what Mozart played as an encore when one

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was demanded after his solos, which raises the question of whether the audience will enter so far into the spirit of things as to demand an encore from Mr. Lee Luvisi, of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, whose task it is to impersonate Mozart at that particular point in the sequence.

A friend of ours who works in radio used to tell a story about the last great Mozart Year, 1956. (That was the birth bicentennial; this year is the death bicentennial, though you can hardly blame Lincoln Center for not mentioning it.) It seems the programming director of one of the country's major good-music stations had planned a Mozart marathon of some kind, and was basking in pride at its success when he received a curt memo from his corporate superior: "Mozart —tinkle, tinkle." Those were the days when classical radio's mission was primarily the dissemination of the great red-blooded Romantic symphonic classics. As we read the other day in the *Times*, taste in radio today runs much more to pleasant, upbeat background music. There is plenty of Mozart. We hope it is not the "tinkle, tinkle" quality that makes him so universally acceptable now, and we also hope that laying his music over the next twenty months like wall-to-wall carpeting does not lead us to hear him as background. Actually there is both lively, penetrating Mozart performance and efficient, intellectually passive Mozart performance going on in the world today; we will see which kind dominates the mixture at Lincoln Center.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; for Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St., 854-7799; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**Die Fledermaus,** with Pamela Coburn, Barbara Kilduff, Helga Dernesch, Neil Rosenshein, Siegfried Jerusalem, Walter Berry, and Dom DeLuise; conducted by Julius Rudel. (Jan. 21, Jan. 25, and Jan. 28, all at 8.) . . . **Un Ballo in Maschera,** with Aprile Millo, Harolyn Blackwell, Florence Quivar, Luciano Pavarotti, and Leo Nucci; James Levine. (Jan. 22 at 8 and Jan. 26 at 1:30.) . . . **Die Zauberflöte,** with Kathleen Battle, Luciana Serra, Peter Kazaras, Manfred Hemm, and Kurt Moll; James Levine. (Jan. 23 and Jan. 26 at 8.) . . . With Kathleen Battle, Luciana Serra, Francisco Araiza, David Malis, and Kurt Moll; James Levine. (Jan. 30 at 8.) . . . **Don Giovanni,** with Cheryl Studer, Patricia Schuman, Thomas Hampson, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. (Jan. 24 and Jan. 29 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 22 at 7:30: Jacob Druckman leads the New York première of his "Brangle," and Samuel Wong conducts works by Haydn and Lalo (his "Symphonie Espagnole," with violinist Mark Peskanov). . . . ¶ Jan. 24-25 at 8 and Jan. 29 at 7:30: Zdenek Macal conducts Mendelssohn's "Reformation" Symphony, Kabalevsky's First Cello Concerto (with soloist Lorne Munroe), and the New York première of "Eating Living Monkeys," one of an ongoing series of compositions by David Lang meant to evoke the world of our ancestors, the cavemen.

Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra—Raymond Leppard conducts the first symphonies of Sibelius and Shostakovich, as well as Britten's "A Charm of Lullabies," with contralto Maureen Forrester. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 22 at 8.)

Toronto Symphony—Gunther Herbig conducts works by Webern, Schubert (his "Great" C-Major Symphony), and Prokofiev (his First Violin Concerto, with Cho-Liang Lin). (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 25 at 8.)

Mozart Bicentennial Sendoff—On Mozart's two-hundred-and-thirty-fifth birthday, Lincoln Center presents ten of the eight hundred and thirty-five compositions that will be performed there during the Mozart bicentennial. The performers are sopranos Barbara Kilduff, Ruth Ann Swenson, and Dawn Upshaw; tenor Vinson Cole; pianists Jeffrey Kahane, Lee Luvisi, and Dan-Wen Wei; and Zubin Mehta, conducting the New York Philharmonic and members of the Juilliard Orchestra. (Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 27 at 2.)

Riverside Symphony—George Rothman conducts music for string orchestra, with works by Dvořák, Prokofiev, and Martinů (his "Double Concerto for Two String Orchestras, Piano, and Timpani," featuring pianist Alan Feinberg). (Miller Theatre, Columbia University. Jan. 27 at 4. For information about free tickets, call 864-4197.)

Collegium Antiquum—Mary Jane Newman directs Mozart's Mass in D (K. 194), as well as several of his motets and church sonatas. Presented by the Friends of Music. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. Jan. 27 at 5. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Luciano Pavarotti and Friends—The tenor is joined by sopranos Cheryl Studer and Renée Fleming, mezzo-soprano Dolora Zajick, bass Paul Plishka, and five other singers chosen by Mr. Pavarotti, in a wide-ranging program of arias and ensembles. Julius Rudel conducts the New York City Opera Orchestra. (Avery Fisher Hall. Jan. 30 at 8.)

Boston Symphony—Seiji Ozawa conducts two works written in 1944: Bartók's "Concerto for Orchestra" and Pavel Haas's "Study for String Orchestra." The latter was written in the Theresienstadt concentration camp; its composer died later the same year at Auschwitz. Also on the program is Wieniawski's First Violin Concerto, with Midori as soloist. (Carnegie Hall. Jan 30-31 at 8.)

Sine Nomine Singers—Harry Saltzman directs music by Schütz and Purcell. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 27 at 3.)

RECITALS

"High-Brow/Low-Brow: An American Sampler"—Seventeen pieces of American music revealing the delicate balance between concert-hall compositions and the popular-music models that sometimes inspire them. Included are works by Ives, Carpenter, Gershwin, Barber, Bernstein, Copland, Carter, and Cage. Soprano Angelina Réaux and pianists Ilana Vered, Margaret Leng Tan, and Robert Kapilow will appear. Presented by Music from Rutgers SummerFest. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan 22 at 8.)

Guild of Composers—Violinist Curtis Macomber and the Music Mobile Ensemble perform recent works by six composers, among them David Diamond and Donald Martino. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Jan. 22 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Emerson String Quartet—Playing music by Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, and Prokofiev. With guest artists Kim Kashkashian (viola), Gary Hoffmann (cello), and Yefim Bronfman (piano). (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 23 at 8.)

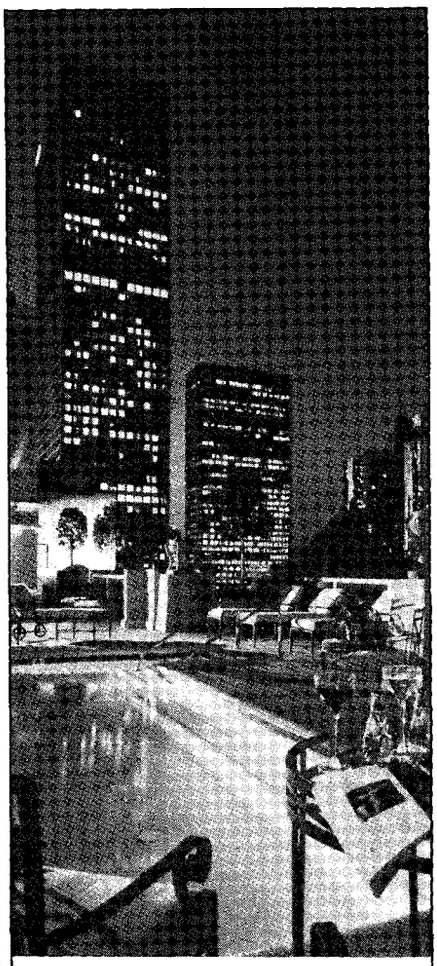
Francesco Trio—The ensemble charts the progress of the violin-cello-piano trio through the last four decades of American music, featuring trios by Mel Powell (1954), Henry Cowell (1965), Seymour Shifrin (1974), and Andrew Imbrie (1989). (Miller Theatre, Columbia University. Jan 23 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Jeffrey Siegel—The pianist plays and discusses ballades by Brahms, Chopin, and Grieg. (92nd Street Y. Jan. 23 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Pianist Jerome Lowenthal plays solo works by Liszt and, with colleagues, trios by Mozart and Beethoven (his "Archduke"). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Jan 24 at 7:30 and Jan. 27 at 4.)

New York Philomusica—Performing music for string-and-horns ensemble by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 24 at 8.)

Radu Lupu—Performing Brahms' Piano Pieces, Op. 118; Mozart's C-Minor Fantasy and So-



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Leontyne Price

nata; and Schubert's late A-Major Sonata. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 24 at 8.)

Alaria Chamber Ensemble—Performing music by Handel, Dvořák, and others (including the "Concertino for Recorder, Violin, Cello, and Harpsichord" by Lennox Berkeley). (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Jan. 24 at 8.)

Samuel Rhodes—Playing unaccompanied works for viola, including compositions by Bach, Alessandro Rolla, and Hindemith, as well as premières of works by Arthur Weisberg and Milton Babbitt (his "Play It Again, Sam," to be played twice, per the title). (Paul Recital Hall, Juilliard School, 144 W. 66th St. Jan. 24 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 874-7515.)

Derek Lee Ragin—Countertenor, in his New York recital début, singing not only Baroque works by Purcell, Handel, and Vivaldi but also later repertoire (including songs by Schubert and Barber). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Jan. 25 at 7.)

New York Chamber Ensemble—Besides works by Mozart and Franck, the ensemble performs the New York première of John Bayless's "Newport Suite" (with the composer at the piano), in which an overture and an epilogue frame six musical caricatures of the past and current presidents of the Norfolk Music Festival. Also in the program is a resuscitation of Brahms' original three-movement setting, for string-and-wind nonet, of what would later become his orchestral Serenade, Op. 11. Stephen Rogers Radcliffe conducts. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Jan. 25 at 8.)

Aulos Ensemble—The quintet plays music by Bach, Handel, Telemann, and Vivaldi on original instruments. (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 25 at 8.)

Improvisations—Robert Dick (a pioneer in expanding flute technique), pianist David Lopato, and percussionist Gregg Bendian create music on the spot. (InHouse, 474 Greenwich Street, off Canal Street, Fifth Floor. Jan. 25 at 8:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Leontyne Price—Soprano, with pianist David Garvey, performing arias by Handel, Mozart, and Verdi, and songs by Joseph Marx, Richard Strauss, and Lee Hoiby, among others. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 26 at 8.)

Pavel Berman—The violinist, son of pianist Lazar Berman and winner of the 1990 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, performs music by Beethoven, Ysaÿe, Prokofiev, and Schedrin in his New York début. Anne Epperson accompanies. (92nd Street Y. Jan. 26 at 8.)

Brooklyn Friends of Chamber Music—Brooklyn-bound Mozarteans can celebrate the composer's anniversary year with a program of his chamber music—from the Flute Sonata, K. 13, written when he was eight, to the E-Flat Piano Quartet, K. 493, a masterpiece of his maturity. Performers include flutist Robert Stallman, violinist Carmit Zori, violist Ah Ling Neu, cellist Jennifer Culp, and pianist Christopher O'Riley. (Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 S. Oxford St. Jan. 27 at 3:30. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

The King's Noyse—A six-member Jacobean-style "violin band" performs songs (with soprano Ellen Hargis) and other secular music from seventeenth-century England and Italy, including "The Little Barley-Corne, Whose Properties and Vertues Here Shall Plainly to the World Appear." Presented by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, W. 121st St. just east of Broadway. 666-0675. Jan. 27 at 4.)

Vladimir Viardo—Piano, performing sonatas by Scriabin, Shostakovich, and Medtner, as well as Prokofiev's "Visions Fugitives." (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 28 at 8.)

Artek Ensemble—Performing seventeenth-century cantatas, madrigals, and instrumental works by Schütz, Buxtehude, Johann Rosenmüller, and Johann Philipp Krieger, with Zephyrus, a vocal quintet. (Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Ninth Ave. at 60th St. Jan. 29 at 8. For information about tickets, call 873-0473.)

Aequalis—A cello-piano-percussion trio presents the New York premières of works by Miriam Gideon, Marilyn Shrude, and James Baker III, as well as music by Webern, Rand Steiger, and Chinary Ung. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 29 at 8.)

Warsaw Wind Quintet—With pianist Michiko Otaki, performing chamber music by Beethoven, Ludwig Thuille, Alexander Tansman, and the contemporary Polish composer Wojciech Kilar. (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 29 at 8.)

Orion String Quartet—Performing quartets by Mendelssohn and Bartók, as well as Chausson's "Concerto," Op. 21, with the assistance of violinist Jaime Laredo and pianist Joseph Kalichstein. (92nd Street Y. Jan. 29-30 at 8.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK
PERSONAL APPEARANCES

ZZ Top—If every band that based its sound on the psychedelic blues-rock of the late sixties and early seventies had the panache and the sense of humor of ZZ Top, the current omnipresence of "classic rock" would not be so depressing. With their long beards, sunglasses, and hot-rod props, this trio from Houston is like a joke concocted by R. Crumb, Ed (Big Daddy) Roth, and some exceptionally canny Pop artist. This tour supporting the new album, "Recycler," features an auto-graveyard stage set, laser images, and the dancing Demolition Debbies, as well as a retro-boogie sound that summons up only the positive connotations of "recycled." / A new band from Atlanta, the **Black Crowes**, will open the show with music that also has a lot more 1972 than 1991 in its "Exile on Main Street" riffs, with the saving grace of real affection for those hairy times. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Jan. 28-29 at 8.)

Richard Hagopian—Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Jan. 26 at 8.

The Kitchen—*Jan. 24:* Azalia Snail, Althea Crawford, and Nick Didkovsky. . . . ¶ Jan. 25: Ben Manley and Dan Farkas. . . . ¶ Jan. 26: Henry Gwiazda and Lauren Mazzacane. . . . ¶ Jan. 27: Evan Gallagher, Denman Maroney, and Albert Sarko. (512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Evenings at 8:30.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Knicks—Vs. the Philadelphia 76ers, Jan. 21 at 1.

Nets—Vs. the Chicago Bulls, Jan. 23. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Lakers, Jan. 25. (Game time, 7:30.)

Rangers—Away until Feb. 3, when they face the Winnipeg Jets.

Islanders—Vs. the Rangers, Jan. 22 at 7:30.

Devils—Vs. the Quebec Nordiques, Jan. 24. . . . ¶ Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, Jan. 26. (Game time, 7:45.)

(The Knicks play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Devils and the Nets at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

CHAMPIONSHIP—FOOTBALL

Super Bowl XXV—In sunny Tampa, Florida. Jan. 27 at 6:15.

The Black Crowes

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Apartment and Home Show—A hundred and fifty exhibitors will convene at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center for the fifth annual event. This year's participants include retailers (of futons, pianos, cooking ranges, security systems, and Murphy beds) and various service organizations: a rent-stabilization association, a tree-moving company, contractors for outdoor pools, and people who will show you how to organize your closets. (Eleventh Ave. between 34th and 39th Sts. Jan. 23, from 4 to 10; Jan. 24-25, from noon to 10; Jan. 26, from 10 to 10; and Jan. 27, from 10 to 6. Tickets at the door.)

Antiques, Antiques, Antiques—A sale by forty-five exhibitors in the Convent of the Sacred Heart. (1 E. 91st St. Jan. 26, from 11 to 7, and Jan. 27, from 11 to 6.) . . . ¶ The thirty-seventh annual Winter Antiques show, with offerings by sixty-seven exhibitors. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Jan. 26, from 11 to 9; Jan. 27, from 11 to 6; and Jan. 28-30, from 11 to 9. Through Feb. 3.) . . . ¶ The Double Pier antique show, offering a diverse collection by more than four hundred dealers. (Passenger Ship Terminal, Twelfth Ave. between 50th and 55th Sts. Jan. 26-27, from 10 to 6. A shuttle bus will run continually between the Armory and the Terminal.)

William H. Whyte—The urban planner, giving a lecture called "How to Steal Sunlight." (Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. Jan. 27 at 2. Admission is free, but reservations are required. Call 935-3960.)

Expeditions, Jan. 27—To Ellis Island, with leader Suzanne Reid. Sponsored by Shore Walkers. Meets inside the stone fort in Battery Park at 10 A.M.. . . . ¶ To Grand Central Terminal, with John Wilson. Meets at Park Avenue and 42nd St., at 1. For information, call 989-2456. . . . ¶ To Central Park, to see geological formations with the Urban Park Rangers. Meets at the Dairy, mid-Park at 64th St., at 2. . . . ¶ To Chelsea, sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. Meets at 3. For information, call 265-2663.

Discussion—Mary Lea Bandy, Nora Ephron, and Wendy Wasserstein talk about writing comedy for the screen. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. Jan. 22 at 6:30. For information about tickets, call 708-9795.)

Readings—Jan. 27 at 8: V. S. Naipaul reading from his latest work, "India: A Million Mutinies Now." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.) . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 8: Joyce Johnson, Alfred Kazin, and Phillip Lopate read from their own works about New York. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.) . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: Mary McGarry Morris, E. Annie Proulx, and John L'Heureux all read from recent works. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799.) . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 6:30: James Naughton, Joanna Gleason, Barbara Barrie, Keith Szarabajka, and Jane Curtin read from stories by S. J. Perelman, John Updike, Colette, Stuart Dybek, and Tobias Wolff. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 17.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "To Sleep with Anger" (†).
Theatre 2: The Third Animation Celebration.
Theatre 3: "Vincent & Theo" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 24: "Mermaids" (directed by Richard Benjamin), with Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder, and Christina Ricci. From Jan. 25: "Too Much Sun" (Robert Downey), with Robert Downey, Jr., Eric Idle, Ralph Macchio, and Andrea Martin.
Theatre 5: "The Russia House" (†).
Theatre 6: "Metropolitan" (Whit Stillman), with Edward Clements, Carolyn Farina, Christopher Eigeman, and Taylor Nichols.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through Jan. 24: "Diego Rivera: I Paint What I See" (Mary Lance and Eric Breitbart), a documentary; "Frida" (Paul Leduc; in Spanish), with Ofelia Medina; and "Rodrigo D: No Future" (Victor Manuel Gaviria; a Colombian film, in Spanish).
From Jan. 25: "A Tale of the Wind" (1988, Joris Ivens and Marceline Loridan; in French), with Ivens.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 2: "Not Without My Daughter" (Brian Gilbert), with Sally Field.
Theatre 3: "Flight of the Intruder" (John Milius), with Danny Glover, Willem Dafoe, and Brad Johnson.

Cinema 12th, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Jan. 24: To be announced.
From Jan. 25: "The Vanishing" (†).

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "The Godfather Part III" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dances with Wolves" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Godfather Part III" (†).
Theatre 4: "Flight of the Intruder" (John Milius), with Danny Glover, Willem Dafoe, and Brad Johnson.
Theatre 5: "Dances with Wolves" (†).
Theatre 6: "Not Without My Daughter" (Brian Gilbert), with Sally Field.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"White Fang" (Randal Kleiser), with Klaus Maria Brandauer and Ethan Hawke.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Lionheart" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Green Card" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hamlet" (Franco Zeffirelli), with Mel Gibson, Glenn Close, Alan Bates, and Paul Scofield.
Theatre 3: "The Sheltering Sky" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Field" (Jim Sheridan), with Richard Harris, John Hurt, Tom Berenger, Brenda Fricker, and Sean Bean.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "The Godfather Part III" (†).
Theatre 2: "Flight of the Intruder" (John Milius), with Danny Glover, Willem Dafoe, and Brad Johnson.
Theatre 3: "Mermaids" (Richard Benjamin) with Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder, and Christina Ricci.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Awakenings" (Penny Marshall), with Robert De Niro, Robin Williams, John Heard, Julie Kavner, Penelope Ann Miller, and Max von Sydow.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"GoodFellas" (†).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Eve of Destruction" (Duncan Gibbins), with Gregory Hines and Renée Soutendijk.
Theatre 2: "White Fang" (Randal Kleiser), with Klaus Maria Brandauer and Ethan Hawke.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Come See the Paradise" (Alan Parker), with Dennis Quaid and Tamlyn Tomita.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French), with Gérard Depardieu.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Kindergarten Cop" (Ivan Reitman), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Penelope Ann Miller, Pamela Reed, Linda Hunt, and Richard Tyson.
Theatre 2: "Lionheart" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Flight of the Intruder" (John Milius), with Danny Glover, Willem Dafoe, and Brad Johnson.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 24: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin. From Jan. 25: "The Grifters" (†).
Theatre 2: "Awakenings" (Penny Marshall), with Robert De Niro, Robin Williams, John Heard, Julie Kavner, Penelope Ann Miller, and Max von Sydow.

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Green Card" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 27: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (†). From Jan. 28: "Memories of a Marriage" (Kasper Rostrup; in Danish).
Theatre 3: "The Bonfire of the Vanities" (†).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Look Who's Talking Too" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta, Kirstie Alley, and Olympia Dukakis.
Theatre 2: "Not Without My Daughter" (Brian Gilbert), with Sally Field.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Once Around" (Lasse Hallström), with Richard Dreyfuss, Holly Hunter, Danny Aiello, Laura San Giacomo, and Gena Rowlands.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Russia House" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Godfather Part III" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Hamlet" (Franco Zeffirelli), with Mel Gibson, Glenn Close, Alan Bates, and Paul Scofield.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"The Godfather Part III" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Kindergarten Cop" (Ivan Reitman), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Theatre 2: "Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "White Fang" (Randal Kleiser), with Klaus Maria Brandauer, Ethan Hawke, Seymour Cassel, and James Remar.
Theatre 2: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 29: Six new films from Europe, South America, and Asia. From Jan. 30: "Wait for Me in Heaven" (1987, directed by Antonio Mercero; in Spanish), with Jose Soriano and Chus Lampreave.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: (Separate admissions) "Privilege" (Yvonne Rainer), with Alice Spivak and Novella Nelson; and "Breathless" (1959, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Lionheart" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 2: "Awakenings" (Penny Marshall), with Robert De Niro, Robin Williams, John Heard, Julie Kavner, Penelope Ann Miller, and Max von Sydow.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Hamlet" (Franco Zeffirelli), with Mel Gibson, Glenn Close, Alan Bates, and Paul Scofield.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "The Godfather Part III" (†).
Theatre 2: "Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Green Card" (†).
Theatre 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.
Theatre 3: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 4: "Reversal of Fortune" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.
Theatre 2: "Kindergarten Cop" (Ivan Reitman), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Theatre 3: "Once Around" (Lasse Hallström), with Richard Dreyfuss, Holly Hunter, Danny Aiello, Laura San Giacomo, and Gena Rowlands.
Theatre 4: "Come See the Paradise" (Alan Parker), with Dennis Quaid and Tamlyn Tomita.
Theatre 5: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern, John Heard, and Catherine O'Hara.
Theatre 6: "Awakenings" (Penny Marshall), with Robert De Niro, Robin Williams, John Heard, Julie Kavner, Penelope Ann Miller, and Max von Sydow.
Theatre 7: "The End of Innocence" (Dyan Cannon), with Cannon, John Heard, and George Coe.
Theatre 8: "The Long Walk Home" (Richard Pearce), with Sissy Spacek and Whoopi Goldberg.
Theatre 9: Through Jan. 24: "Mermaids" (Richard Benjamin), with Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder, and Christina Ricci. From Jan. 25: "The Grifters" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Bonfire of the Vanities" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lionheart" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 3: "Eve of Destruction" (Duncan Gibbins), with Gregory Hines and Renée Soutendijk.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Green Card" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Hidden Agenda" (Ken Loach), with Frances McDormand, Brian Cox, and Brad Dourif.
Theatre 2: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 3: "Kindergarten Cop" (Ivan Reitman), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Penelope Ann Miller, Pamela Reed, Linda Hunt, and Richard Tyson.
Theatre 4: "Lionheart" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 5: "Mermaids" (Richard Benjamin), with Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder, and Christina Ricci.
Theatre 6: "Postcards from the Edge" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Edward Scissorhands" (†).

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Mermaids" (Richard Benjamin), with Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder, and Christina Ricci.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Sheltering Sky" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Men of Respect" (William Reilly), with John Turturro, Katherine Borowitz, Dennis Farina, Peter Boyle, and Lilia Skala.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"The Long Walk Home" (Richard Pearce), with Sissy Spacek and Whoopi Goldberg.

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"Alice" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Awakenings" (Penny Marshall), with Robert De Niro, Robin Williams, John Heard, Julie Kavner, Penelope Ann Miller, and Max von Sydow.

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven; in German), with Lena Stolze.
Theatre 2: "Taxi Blues" (Pavel Lounguine; in Russian).
Theatre 3: "Rikyu" (Hiroshi Teshigahara; in Japanese), with Rentaro Mikuni and Tsutomu Yamazaki.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Once Around" (Lasse Hallström), with Richard Dreyfuss, Holly Hunter, Danny Aiello, Laura San Giacomo, and Gena Rowlands.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Flight of the Intruder" (John Milius), with Danny Glover, Willem Dafoe, and Brad Johnson.
Theatre 2: "Not Without My Daughter" (Brian Gilbert), with Sally Field.
Theatre 3: "The Russia House" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 24: "Mermaids" (Richard Benjamin), with Cher, Bob Hoskins, Winona Ryder, and Christina Ricci. From Jan. 25: "The Grifters" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Godfather Part III" (†).
Theatre 6: "Green Card" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 2: "Kindergarten Cop" (Ivan Reitman), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Penelope Ann Miller, Pamela Reed, Linda Hunt, and Richard Tyson.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Lionheart" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 2: "Eve of Destruction" (Duncan Gibbins), with Gregory Hines and Renée Soutendijk.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Misery" (directed by Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.
Theatre 2: "Predator 2" (Stephen Hopkins), with Danny Glover and Gary Busey.
Theatre 3: "The Bonfire of the Vanities" (†).
Theatre 4: "Come See the Paradise" (Alan Parker), with Dennis Quaid and Tamlyn Tomita.
Theatre 5: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 6: "Look Who's Talking Too" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta, Kirstie Alley, and Olympia Dukakis.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Flight of the Intruder" (John Milius), with Danny Glover, Willem Dafoe, and Brad Johnson.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Eve of Destruction" (Duncan Gibbins), with Gregory Hines and Renée Soutendijk.
Theatre 2: "Not Without My Daughter" (Brian Gilbert), with Sally Field.
Theatre 3: "The Russia House" (†).

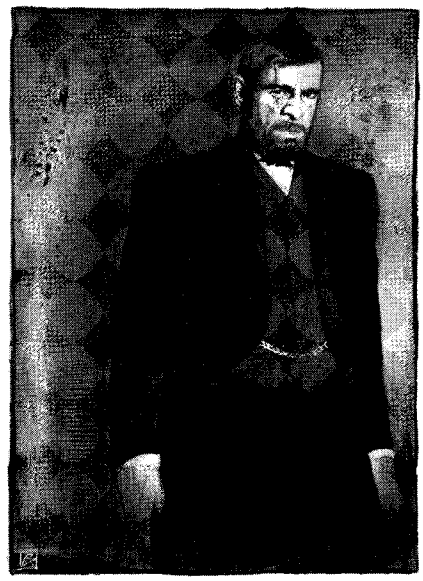
Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"The Godfather Part III" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern, John Heard, and Catherine O'Hara.
Theatre 2: "Lionheart" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "White Fang" (Randal Kleiser), with Klaus Maria Brandauer, Ethan Hawke, Seymour Cassel, and James Remar.
Theatre 2: "Reversal of Fortune" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through Jan. 22: "The Barefoot Contessa" (1954, directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Humphrey Bogart, Ava Gardner, Edmond O'Brien, and Rossano Brazzi; and "Pandora and the Flying Dutchman" (1951, Albert Lewin), with Gardner, James Mason, and Nigel Patrick.
Jan. 23-24: "Bhowani Junction" (1956, George Cukor), with Ava Gardner, Stewart Granger, and Bill Travers; and "The Great Sinner" (1949, Robert Siodmak), with Gregory Peck, Gardner, Walter Huston, Ethel Barrymore, Frank Morgan, and Melvyn Douglas.



Boris Karloff in "The Old Dark House"

Jan. 25-26: "The Hucksters" (1947, Jack Conway), with Clark Gable, Deborah Kerr, Sydney Greenstreet, and Ava Gardner; and "One Touch of Venus" (†).
Jan. 27-28: "The More the Merrier" (†) and "These Three" (†).
Jan. 29-30: "Ride the High Country" (†); and "Stars in My Crown" (1950, Jacques Tourneur), with Joel McCrea, Dean Stockwell, Ellen Drew, Alan Hale, and Lewis Stone.

Cinema Village, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
Through Jan. 22: "The 400 Blows" (1959, François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and "Jules and Jim" (1962, Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre.
Jan. 23-26: "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" (1990, Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish), with Antonio Banderas, Victoria Abril, Francisco Rabal, Loles Leon, and Lola Cardona; and "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (1990, Peter Greenaway), with Michael Gambon, Helen Mirren, Alan Howard, and Richard Bohringer.
Jan. 27-29: "The Unbelievable Truth" (1990, Hal Hartley), with Adrienne Shelly, Robert Burke, Christopher Cooke, and Julia McNeal; and "Strapless" (1988, David Hare), with Blair Brown, Bruno Ganz, and Bridget Fonda.
From Jan. 30: "Straight Through the Heart."

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Jan. 21: "Weekend" (1968, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Mireille Darc and Jean Yanne; and "Tout Va Bien" (1972, Jean-Pierre Gorin and Godard; in French), with Yves Montand and Jane Fonda.
Jan. 22-25: "Pierrot le Fou" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Anna Karina; and "A Woman Is a Woman" (1961, Godard; in French), with Karina, Belmondo, and Jean-Claude Brialy.
Jan. 26-29: "My Life to Live" (1962, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina; and "Two or Three Things I Know About Her" (1967, Godard; in French), with Marina Vlady.
From Jan. 30: "Les Carabiniers" (†) and "Le Petit Soldat" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Jan. 21: "The Ritual" (1969, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ingrid Thulin, Anders Ek, and Gunnar Björnstrand; and "After the Rehearsal" (1984, Bergman; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson, Thulin, and Lena Olin.
Jan. 22: "Cavalcade" (1933, Frank Lloyd), with Diana Wynyard, Clive Brook, Una O'Connor, Beryl Mercer, and Herbert Mundin; and "In Which We Serve" (1942, Noël Coward), with Coward, John Mills, Bernard Miles, Celia Johnson, and Michael Wilding.
Jan. 23: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1958, Richard Brooks), with Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Newman, Burl Ives, Judith Anderson, Madeleine Sherwood, and Jack Carson; and "The Night of the Iguana" (1964, John Huston), with Richard Burton, Ava Gardner, Deborah Kerr, and Sue Lyon.
Jan. 24: "Mean Streets" (†); and "Bang the Drum Slowly" (1973, John Hancock), with Michael Moriarty and Robert De Niro.
Jan. 25-26: "Charade" (1963, Stanley Donen), with Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Walter Matthau, James Coburn, and George Kennedy; and "Arabesque" (1966, Donen), with Gregory Peck, Sophia Loren, and Alan Badel.
Jan. 27: "The Fortune" (†); and "Carnal Knowledge" (1971, Mike Nichols), with Jack Nicholson, Candice Bergen, Arthur Garfunkel, and Ann-Margret.
Jan. 28: "Band of Outsiders" (†); and "Breathless" (1959, Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo.
Jan. 29: "Made for Each Other" (†); and "Tell Me That You Love Me, Junie Moon" (1970, Otto Preminger), with Liza Minnelli, Ken Howard, James Coco, and Kay Thompson.
Jan. 30: "And Then There Were None" (1945, René Clair), with Barry Fitzgerald, Walter Huston, and Louis Hayward; and "The Old Dark House" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Jan. 21 at 2:30: "Portrait" (1963), "Leah" (1967), and "A Man Is More Than the Sum of His Parts/A Woman Is" (1971), all directed by Jon Jost. . . . ¶ Jan. 21 at 6 and Jan. 25 at 3: "Dead End" (1977, Jost), with Tom Blair. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 3 and 6: "Diego Rivera: I Paint What I See" (1989, Mary Lance and Eric Breitbart), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 6: "Angel City" (1976, Jost), with Bob Glaudini. . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 2: "Bulk Garbage" (1990, Helke Misselwitz; in German), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 2:30: "Chameleon" (1978, Jost), with Glaudini. . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 5: "In the Splendor of Happiness" (1990, Johann Feindt and Helga Reidemeister; in German), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 5: "Stagefright" (1981, Jost), with Shaun Lawton. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 2: "My War" (1990, Harriet Eder and Thomas Kufus; in German). . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 2:30: "Slow Moves" (1983, Jost), with Roxanne Rogers. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 5: "Forbidden Love" (1990, Helmut Dziuba; in German), with Julia Brendler. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 5: "Repetition" (1963), "Judith" (1965), "Flower" (1970), and "Traps" (1967), all directed by Jost. . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 2:30: "Blue Eyed" (1989, Reinhard Hauff; in German), with George Götz. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 3: "Recent Sorrows" (1984, Jerry Barrish). . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 6: "Rendezvous in Travers" (1989, Michael Gwisdek; in German), with Hermann Beyer. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 6:30: "Shuttlecock" (1989, Barrish). Mr. Barrish will be present. . . . ¶ All eleven parts of "Heimat" (1984, Edgar Reitz; in German). Jan. 21 at 2:30: Part 1, "The Call of Far Away Places, 1919-28." . . . Jan. 21 at 6: Part 2, "The Centre of the World, 1928-33," and Part 3, "The Best Christmas Ever, 1935." . . . Jan. 22 at 2:30: Part 4, "The Highway, 1938," and Part 5, "Up and Away and Back, 1938-1939." . . . Jan. 22 at 6: Part 6, "The Home Front, 1943," and Part 7, "Soldiers and Love, 1944." . . . Jan. 24 at 2:30: Part 8, "The Americans, 1945-47." . . . Jan. 24 at 6: Part 9, "Hermännchen, 1956-57." . . . Jan. 25 at 2:30: Part 10, "The Proud Years, 1967-1969." . . . Jan. 25 at 6: Part 11, "The Feast of the Living and the Dead."

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Programs about contemporary comedians and people who influenced them. Lily Tomlin: Jan. 22-26: "Lily" (1973, CBS) and excerpts featuring Jean Carroll, Imogene Coca, Beatrice Lillie, and Joan Davis. . . . Dennis Miller: From Jan. 29: "Mr. Miller Goes to Washington" (1988, HBO) and "Chiller Theatre—The Final Show" (1983, WPXI). Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15. . . . ¶ Jan. 22-26: "A Long Time Till Dawn" (1953, NBC), an episode of "Kraft Television Theatre," with James Dean; and "The Unlighted Road" (1955, CBS), an episode of "Schlitz Playhouse of the Stars," with Dean and Natalie Wood. Showings Tuesday at 2 and 5:30 and Wednesday through Saturday at 2.

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Jan. 23 at 8: "Mouchette" (1966, Robert Bresson; in

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French, with no English subtitles). . . . ¶ Jan. 23-24 at 9:30 and Jan. 25-26 at 10:30: "Small White House" (1990, Richard Newton). . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 8: "Prelude" (1961) and "Dog Star Man" (1964), both directed by Stan Brakhage. . . . ¶ Jan. 25-26 at 7: "To the Top" (1990, Anita Thacher), "Peace of Mind" (1983, Mary Filippo), "Who Do You Think You Are" (1987, Filippo), and "Feel the Fear" (1990, Filippo). . . . ¶ Jan. 25-26 at 8:30: Three films about the artist Isamu Noguchi. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 5: "Au Hazard Balthazar" (1966, Bresson; in French, with no English subtitles). . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 7: "The Art of Vision" (1965, Brakhage). . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: "Reassemblage" (1982, Trihn T. Minh-ha), "Castro Street" (1966, Bruce Baillie), and "Killer of Sheep" (1976, Charles Burnett).

[illegible]NELL LIBRARY CENTER, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—Jan. 24 at noon: "Salesman" (1969, the Maysles Brothers). . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at noon: "Dead of Night" (1945, Alberto Cavalcanti, Robert Hamer, Charles Crichton, and Basil Bearden). . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at 2:30: "Inughuit: The People at the Navel of the Earth" (1983, Staffan and Ylva Julén).

[illegible]MERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—A program of films for which Gordon Willis was the cinematographer. Jan. 26 at 2: "The Parallax View" (1974, Alan J. Pakula), with Warren Beatty, Paula Prentiss, William Daniels, and Hume Cronyn. . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 4:30: "All the President's Men" (1976, Pakula), with Robert Redford, Dustin Hoffman, Jason Robards, and Martin Balsam. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 2: "Annie Hall" (Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 4: "Manhattan" (1979, Allen), with Allen, Keaton, Meryl Streep, Mariel Hemingway, and Michael Murphy.

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"In Aztlán: The Films of the Chicano Movement, 1969-79." Jan. 22-23 and Jan. 26 at 2: "Los Desarraiquados" (1974, Francisco X. Camplis), "The Unwanted" (1976, José Luis Ruiz), and "After the Earthquake" (1979, Lourdes Portillo and Nina Serano). . . . ¶ Jan. 24-25 and Jan. 27 at 2: "Reflecciónes" (1973, Jim Gardner), "Garment Workers" (1975, Susan Racho), "De Colores" (1975, Jay Ojeda), "La Raza" (1990, Andrew Doucette), "Mujeria: The Olmeca Rap" (1990, Osa Hidalgo-de la Riva), "Anima" (1989, Frances Salomé España), and "Born in East L.A." (1985, Cheech Marin).

JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Jan. 21 at 6:30: "The Lady Pickpocket" (1960, Yasuzo Masumura; in Japanese), with Machiko Kyo and Eiji Funakoshi. . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 6:30: "Island of Hell" (1977, Kon Ichikawa; in Japanese), with Koji Ishizaka. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 6:30: "The Last Gunfight" (1960, Kihachi Okamoto; in Japanese).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Jan. 23 at 12:30 and 6: "Last Year at Marienbad" (1961, Alain Resnais; in French), with Delphine Seyrig. . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 3:15 and 8:45: "Muriel" (1963, Resnais; in French), with Seyrig. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 3 and 6: "India Song" (1974, Marguerite Duras; in French), with Seyrig, Michael Lonsdale, and Matthieu Carrière. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 8:30: "Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles" (1975, Chantal Akerman; in French), with Seyrig, Jan Decorte, and Henri Storck. . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Jesus of Montreal" (1989, Denys Arcand; in French), with Lothaire Bluteau, Catherine Wilkening, and Johanne-Marie Tremblay.

ADAM CLAYTON POWELL, JR., STATE OFFICE BUILDING, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—Jan. 25 at 1, 4:10, and 7:20, and Jan. 26 at 7: "Mo' Better Blues" (1990, Spike Lee), with Denzel Washington, Cyndi Williams, Joie Lee, Giancarlo Esposito, and Lee; and "The John Coltrane Legacy" (1985, Burrill Crohn). . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 1 and 4:50: "Brightness" (1987, Souleymane Cisse); and "Glory" (1989, Edward Zwick), with Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Matthew Broderick.

COLLECTIVE FOR LIVING CINEMA, 41 White St. (925-2111)—From Jan. 25 at 7 and 9: "Killer of Sheep" (1981, Charles Burnett), with Henry Gayle Sanders, Kaycee Moore, and Charles Bracy.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

ALICE—Woody Allen's latest picture is an awkward blend of whimsy and moralizing. The title character, played by Mia Farrow, is a pampered Upper East Side lady-who-lunches. She lives in a huge apartment with her handsome husband (William Hurt), her adorable children, and a staff, and she looks terrific. But her life, the movie tells us, is totally empty and false. A Chinatown doctor (Keye Luke) gives her a variety of herbal remedies to knock the yuppie malaise out of her system. One of them makes her invisible; one makes her irresistible to men; and so on. As these fantasy episodes mount up, Alice begins to see how artificial her life is, how far she's strayed from the pure ideals of her Catholic girlhood, how much more love she needs than she has been getting, and what a revolting piece of Wasp slime her husband is. In the end, the heroine seems, incredibly, to have redeemed herself through self-absorption; the movie doesn't benefit from any such miracle. Although there are more jokes here than in any of Allen's last few features, the picture isn't really a comedy; it's a sermon with gags. The large cast also includes Joe Mantegna, Alec Baldwin, Blythe Danner, Judy Davis, Bob Balaban, and Bernadette Peters (who does a sensational brief turn as a cynical muse).—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/31/90.) (Loews Fine Arts.)

BAND OF OUTSIDERS (1964)—The two heroes (Claude Brasseur and Sami Frey) begin by playacting crime-and-violence movies, then really act them out in their lives. Their girl (Anna Karina), wanting to be accepted, tells them there is money in the villa where she lives. And we watch, apprehensive and puzzled, as the three of them go through the robbery they're committing as if it were something in a movie—or a fairy tale. The crime doesn't fit the daydreamers or their milieu: we half expect to be told it's all a joke—that they can't really be committing an armed robbery. This Jean-Luc Godard film is like a reverie of a gangster movie—a gangster movie as students in an espresso bar might remember it or plan it. It has the gangster-film virtues (loyalty, daring), but they are mixed with innocence, amorality, lack of equilibrium. It's as if a French poet took a banal American crime novel and told it to us in terms of the romance and beauty he read between the lines; Godard re-creates the gangsters and the moll with *his* world of associations—seeing them as people in a Paris café, mixing them with Rimbaud, Kafka, Alice in Wonderland. This lyrical tragicomedy is perhaps Godard's most delicately charming film. Script by Godard (he's also the narrator), based on the novel "Fool's Gold," by Dolores Hitchens. Cinematography by Raoul Coutard. In French—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 28.)

THE BONFIRE OF THE VANITIES—Brian De Palma walked right off a cliff when he made this version of Tom Wolfe's novel—a satirical exposé of how democracy works in New York in the eighties. A rich Wasp bond trader and his mistress, in his Mercedes, hit a young black man; as a result, pressure groups, politicians, and newspapermen are out to get him, and they break him. The story is overwhelmed by a shrill, sprightly, bravura style that's meant to be dizzyingly aggressive. What's missing is the shock and offensiveness that would give the commotion some point. The picture keeps pulling back from the true outrageousness of borderline racist humor; that was what gave the novel its hostile charge. Without that, not only does the movie miss the target, you don't know what the target is. What's left is like a sci-fi version of a loud, overbright screwball comedy. Michael Christofer's script suggests that he was hired to make the worst adaptation that could be made, and the score, by Dave Grusin, is in some tinkling world of its own. With Tom Hanks, Bruce Willis, Melanie Griffith, Morgan Freeman, F. Murray Abraham (uncredited), John Hancock, Kim Cattrall, Saul Rubinek, Richard Libertini, Donald Moffat, Robert Stephens, André Gregory, Alan King, and Clifton James.—P.K. (1/14/91) (Cinema 3rd Avenue, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Criterion Center.)

Sally Field in "Not Without My Daughter"

LES CARABINIERS (1963)—Jean-Luc Godard's film about two blank-faced conscripts who go off to war thinking it a great opportunity to get rich is oddly distanced and pedagogical, and it stumbles along—in a deliberately uninvolving style—for its first hour. But when the men return with their loot, in the form of picture postcards, the sequence is conceived with great wit and is brilliantly prolonged; this huge joke seems to be what everything else was heading toward. For a viewer, the elation of this sequence can make the whole experience seem original and exciting. From a script by Godard, Jean Gruault, and Roberto Rossellini, based on the play "I Carabinieri," by Benjamino Joppolo. In French.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting Jan. 30.)

DANCES WITH WOLVES—Set during the Civil War, this big Indians-versus-Cavalry epic is like a New Age social-studies lesson. Kevin Costner, who directed and is the star, has an untroubled face and laid-back diction. As Lieutenant Dunbar, a Union officer, he sees that the Sioux have a superior culture and he changes sides. This is a nature-boy movie, a kid's daydream of being an Indian. When Dunbar has become a Sioux named Dances with Wolves, he writes in his journal that he knows for the first time who he really is. Costner has feathers in his hair and feathers in his head. He and his friend Michael Blake (who worked up the material with him in mind and then wrote the novel and the screenplay) are trying to show the last years of the Sioux as an independent nation from the Sioux point of view, and it's probably that sympathy for the Indians that the audience responds to. But Costner is a moviemaking novice: instead of helping us understand the Sioux, he simply makes the Sioux like genial versions of us. This three-hour Western weeper, with its sluggish action and poorly shaped scenes, was made by a bland megalomaniac. (The Indians should have named him Plays with Camera.) Shot in South Dakota; the wide-screen cinematography, by Dean Semler, is spacious and open at times, and there are fine images of buffalo pounding by. With Mary McDonnell, Maury Chaykin, Robert Pastorelli, Graham Greene as Kicking Bird, and Rodney A. Grant as Wind in His Hair.—P.K. (12/17/90) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews Tower East, and Loews Paramount.)

EDWARD SCISSORHANDS—A Transylvanian castle

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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

rises high in the air out of the end of a bare, flat suburban street. One day, Peg Boggs, the Avon lady (Dianne Wiest, magically daffy), makes a call on the macabre, tumbledown place and discovers an adolescent fairy-tale boy, white-faced Edward (Johnny Depp), with two collections of long sharp shears where his hands should be. (He was created in the castle's kitchen workshop by an aged inventor—Vincent Price, in flashbacks—who died before he could attach the hands he had prepared.) Peg invites the boy to come home with her. At first, this movie, directed by Tim Burton, has a lovely comic spirit, but when the suburbanites think Edward is dangerous and turn against him, the material turns into cheesy, plot-centered melodrama. It has a central flaw: the idea of a boy who cuts when he wants to touch is pre-interpreted. He's the pure creative artist who can't be around people because he can't help hurting them; he's the woeful misunderstood kid. Edward is an emasculated Tim Burton—he's Burton saying, "I've always been a sweet guy." (The picture becomes Christmassy and angelic.) With Winona Ryder.—P.K. (12/17/90) (Ziegfeld.)

THE FORTUNE (1975)—Charmless slapstick farce set in the twenties, with Warren Beatty as a larcenous sheik and Jack Nicholson as a gleaming-eyed lowlifer and freaky coward. These two play mercenary clowns who fumble in their attempts to kill a plump-cheeked heiress (Stockard Channing). Mike Nichols directed, from a screenplay by Adrien Joyce (a pseudonym for Carol Eastman). The tone is too playful, too bright. Is the heiress herself meant to be a treasure? Is she meant to be charmingly klutzy? You can't tell. The whole thing seems to exist in a frame of reference that rules out feeling, but then the heiress's mascara is smeared at the end; this suggests that she's capable of suffering, though she has never been permitted a human emotion, such as believing in the two men. Some vital element seems to be missing from the film—affection, maybe, or confidence in the insulated, cloud-cuckoo-land atmosphere (which may remind you of Elaine May's much friendlier "A New Leaf"). Nicholson, with his sparse hair frizzed out in all directions, comes through the best; at moments he lifts himself single-handed into slapstick, like a demented Laurel & Hardy in one. With Scatman Crothers, Richard B. Shull, Dub Taylor, Ian Wolfe, and Florence Stanley.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 27.)

THE GODFATHER PART III—Lightning didn't strike three times. It's a big, ambitious project, and it looks like the first two "Godfather" movies, but the internal force has vanished, and the quality of feeling—what gave the films their lyricism and made the public bond with them—is gone. In the first two pictures the director, Francis Ford Coppola, took opportunistic, sensationalist material and turned it into drama. Now he doesn't transform the sensationalist material (the Corleones' involvement in Vatican swindles); he just presents it, with an aura of solemnity. With Al Pacino as the morose godfather, Andy Garcia as his successor, and Diane Keaton, Talia Shire, Eli Wallach, Joe Mantegna, Donal Donnelly, Raf Vallone, Bridget Fonda, Sofia Coppola, George Hamilton, Franc D'Ambrosio, and Helmut Berger. Written by the director and Mario Puzo.—P.K. (1/14/91) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, U. A. East, Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

GOODFELLAS—The director, Martin Scorsese, gives you a lift. He loves the Brooklyn organized-crime milieu, because it's where distortion, hyperbole, and exuberance all commingle. The movie is about being cock of the walk, with banners flying and crowds cheering. Based on Nicholas Pileggi's nonfiction book "Wiseguy," it's a triumphant piece of filmmaking—journalism and sociology presented with the brio of drama. But the three major hoods, played by Ray Liotta, Robert De Niro, and Joe Pesci, don't have a strong enough presence, and the movie lacks the juice and richness that come with major performances. (It's like the Howard Hawks "Scarface" without Scarface.) What you respond to is Scorsese's bravura: the filmmaking process becomes the subject of the movie. Watching it is like getting strung out on pure sensation. Paul Sorvino as Paulie and Lorraine Bracco as Karen both come through, and other performers in minor roles give the movie a frenzied, funny texture. The screenplay is by Pileggi and Scorsese; the cinematography is by Michael Ballhaus; the editing is by Thelma Schoonmaker.—P.K. (9/24/90) (Eastside Cinema, Quad Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

GREEN CARD—A limp, dispirited romantic comedy, written and directed by Peter Weir. A rather prissy horticulturist (Andie MacDowell) agrees to an in-name-only marriage to a Frenchman (Gérard Depardieu); he needs a green card to stay in New York, and she needs to show that she's married in order to get past the stuffy co-op board of the building in which she wants to buy an apartment. They meet (for the first time) at City Hall, do the deed, and separate, until several months later, when they're forced to pretend that their union is real—that they aren't strangers but devoted partners who know every little thing about each other. This is a serviceable premise for a screwball comedy, but the screwball is apparently not one of Weir's best pitches: the movie is as flat and lifeless as a hanging curve. Depardieu—as shaggy and hefty as ever—is a skillful comedian, and he looks as if he's having a great time. Not even his vivid presence is enough to rescue this wan little picture. Also with Bebe Neuwirth and Gregg Edelman.—T.R. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Quad Cinema, Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Joel McCrea was a leading man with all the qualities, and they're on glorious display in a trio of films playing this week at the Biograph Cinema. As the neighborly doctor in "These Three" (January 27-28), William Wyler's masterly (if bowdlerized) 1936 version of Lillian Hellman's "The Children's Hour," McCrea makes the fledgling schoolteachers played by Merle Oberon and Miriam Hopkins feel as if they've known him all their lives. Lived-in amiability was a McCrea specialty. He also gave his characters a combination of instinctiveness and awareness that animated every inch of his broad face and big body. In "These Three," when he wakes up from an innocent, after-hours snooze in the teachers' all-girls school and accidentally smashes a milk glass, there's something absurdly potent and bumptiously masculine about the crash—you're not surprised that it helps spark a scandal.

McCrea imbued George Stevens' 1943 slapstick love story, "The More the Merrier" (January 27-28), with a homegrown carnal irony. He partners Jean Arthur beautifully in the rumba and the romance. In the film's best moment, they sit on the front steps and kiss; he's all over her like a slimeless octopus. The petting is done with little more than the couple's dance of hands, yet it's one of the funniest sex scenes, and sexiest funny scenes, in movies.

Nineteen years later, McCrea capped his career in Sam Peckinpah's modern classic "Ride the High Country" (January 29-30). His canny, wary portrayal of a righteous old Westerner suggested the effects of aging not just with stiffness but with a slight overinsistence. His readings of the daringly Biblical dialogue have a simple eloquence that deserves to be called noble. With this consummate performance, McCrea, like his character, "entered his house justified."

THE GRIFTERS—This adaptation of one of the punchier pulp novels by Jim Thompson retains Thompson's hardboiled pitilessness. It's about three scam artists: tough, seductive Lilly (Anjelica Huston); her son, Roy (John Cusack), who won't have anything to do with her; and his bubbly bedmate, Myra (Annette Bening), a sex fantasy come to luscious life. These chiselers never got a break and don't give anybody else a break. The director, Stephen Frears, and the scriptwriter, Donald E. Westlake, are smart enough not to attempt to make a big thing out of this L.A. film noir. They keep it snappy, and heighten the sexual electricity. And they smack us with discord: we're watching a form of cabaret. Huston is astounding; you can see why the son is getting even with her by throwing his life away, and Bening's two-faced little-girl quality is just what film noir thrives on. (This is a picture with two competing femmes fatales.) It's thin stuff, but it's pretty terrific. (It even has great opening titles.) With Pat Hingle giving the performance of his life, and Gailard Sartain, Stephen Tobolowsky, J. T. Walsh, Henry Jones, Charles Napier, and Sandy Baron. Cinematography by Oliver Stapleton; production design by Dennis Charles Gassner.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Baronet, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; starting Jan. 25.)

MADE FOR EACH OTHER (1971)—Renee Taylor and her husband, Joseph Bologna, wrote and starred in this original, romantic comedy about a knocked-out, bleached-blond failed actress and a grubby misfit who meet in an encounter group. The movie believes there is a Kingdom of Heaven that you can get to if you help each other be vulnerable and open. It's Frank Capra updated by ethnic humor and simplified Freudianism, but it's so skillfully worked out that it's emotionally pleasing, and Renee Taylor's performance gives the film depth and conviction. Robert B. Bean directed.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 29.)

MEAN STREETS (1973)—A true original, and a triumph of personal filmmaking. This picture about the experience of growing up in New York's Little Italy has an unsettling, episodic rhythm and it's dizzyingly sensual. The director, Martin Scorsese, shows us a thicker-textured rot than we have ever had in an American movie, and a riper sense of evil. With Harvey Keitel as Charlie, Robert De Niro as Johnny Boy, and Richard Romanus, David Proval, Harry Northup, George Memmoli, Amy Robinson, Cesare Danova, and, in bits, David Carradine, Robert Carradine, and the director—he's the gunman in the car. Script by Scorsese and Mardik Martin; cinematography by Kent Wakeford; produced by Jonathan Taplin. (Most of the film was actually shot in Los Angeles.)—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 24.)

MR. & MRS. BRIDGE—An adaptation, by the Merchant-Ivory team (the director James Ivory, the producer Ismail Merchant, and the writer Ruth Prawer Jhabvala), of Evan S. Connell's novels about the painfully respectable Bridge family of Kansas City. Walter and India Bridge (Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward) are pure exemplars of the middle: they're middle-aged and middle-class; they live in a medium-sized city in virtually the dead center of the United States; and they are neither truly happy nor consciously unhappy. They're monsters of moderation. At the beginning of the film, Ivory seems eerily in tune with the novels' distinctive sensibility. The picture gets by, initially, on its strange mood of chilling coziness, and when we tire of that—and we do, because it doesn't change or develop—the actors keep us engaged a while longer. Newman doesn't try to soften the character, or to distance himself from it with exaggerated effects, and his scrupulousness pays off. The character seems not more likable but more human than it does in the novels; by very simple means, Newman enables us to understand Mr. Bridge's insensitivity and emotional ineptitude. And Woodward, too, gives a delicate, subtle performance: she embodies a foolish woman vividly and unpatronizingly. But the screenplay retains the static quality of the books' construction, so at a certain point the scenes begin to feel arbitrary. And Ivory's perspective on the material seems to become clouded by a storm of minutiae—a surfeit of period detail. (The action takes place in the late thirties and early forties.) In the end, the Bridges aren't large enough either to move us

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or to terrify us; they're the Ambersons without the magnificence. Also with Blythe Danner, Kyra Sedgwick, Robert Sean Leonard, Margaret Welsh, and Simon Callow. —T.R. (12/3/90) (Cinema II; through Jan. 27.)

The Old Dark House (1932)—This wonderful deadpan takeoff on horror plays was directed by the eccentric James Whale, in the witty, perverse, and creepy manner he also brought to "The Bride of Frankenstein." Five travellers (Charles Laughton, Melvyn Douglas, Raymond Massey, Gloria Stuart, and Lilian Bond) are caught in a storm in Wales. They seek shelter in a gloomy mansion, which is inhabited by a prize collection of monsters and decadent aristocrats: a mute, scarred brute of a butler (Boris Karloff) attends a grisly madman (Ernest Thesiger), his religious-fanatic hag of a sister (Eva Moore), his pyromaniac-dwarf younger brother (Brember Wells), and their father—a hundred-and-two-year-old baronet. (The performer is listed as "John Dudgeon," but the part is actually played by a woman, Elspeth Dudgeon.) Based on J. B. Priestley's novel "Benighted," this camp comedy-fantasy was adapted by Benn W. Levy, with additional dialogue by R. C. Sherriff.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 30.)

One Touch of Venus (1948)—Robert Walker kisses a statue in Macy's and it comes alive —or, to describe more accurately the performance by the ravishing young Ava Gardner, half alive. Her songs are dubbed (by Eileen Wilson), which adds to the sloe-eyed sleepwalker effect. The film creaks; it's a bowdlerized version of the Broadway show by S. J. Perelman, Ogden Nash, and Kurt Weill. With Olga San Juan, Eve Arden, Tom Conway, and Dick Haymes. Directed by William A. Seiter, from a script by Harry Kurnitz and Frank Tashlin.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Jan. 25-26.)

Le Petit Soldat (1960)—Jean-Luc Godard's first foray into politics, with romance and political extremism and torture and talk of cinema all suspended in an existential mixture. Technically an innovative work, but humanly a baffling one. With Anna Karina and Michel Subor; cinematography by Raoul Coutard. In French.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting Jan. 30.)

Postcards from the Edge—This tale of a sorrowful, wisecracking starlet (Meryl Streep) whose brassy, boozing former-star mother (Shirley MacLaine) started her on sleeping pills when she was nine is camp without the zest of camp. It's camp played borderline straight—a druggy-Cinderella movie about an unformed girl who has to go past despair to find herself. The director, Mike Nichols, is a parodist who feigns sincerity, and his tone keeps slipping around. What's clear is that we're meant to be enthralled by the daughter's radiant face, her refinement, her honesty. Nichols keeps the camera on Streep as if to prove that he can make her a popular big star—a new Crawford or Bette Davis. (She remains distant, emotionally atonal.) The tacky, bright-colored film—a near-plotless version of a woman's picture—is weightless, yet it's watchable. Its jadedness appeals to the narcissism of show-biz insiders and to the would-be insider in the rest of us. (Nichols is acclaimed for being hip to the Zeitgeist.) There are a lot of people to look at: Gene Hackman, Dennis Quaid, Richard Dreyfuss, Annette Bening, Robert Bartlett, CCH Pounder, Oliver Platt, Gary Morton, Mary Wickes, Rob Reiner, Simon Callow, Michael Ontkean, Pepe Serna, and Dana Ivey. The screenplay, by Carrie Fisher (with Nichols' uncredited collaboration), is based on her novel; cinematography by Michael Ballhaus. —P.K. (10/22/90) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

Reversal of Fortune—An entertainingly trashy sick-joke docudrama about how Claus von Bülow's conviction for trying to kill his superrich wife was overturned on appeal through the brainpower of the Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz and his team of students and former students. Jeremy Irons' von Bülow is a pop conception of a decadent aristocrat, and the crowd-pleasing satirical subtext is that the heirs and heiresses of the great fortunes are useless, bored, unloving, and unloved. The fun here is that Irons' performance is a masterly conceit. His von Bülow is a depraved cuckoo; he simply can't resist playing ghoulish comedian and making Dershowitz (Ron Silver) his stooge. The script, by Nicholas Kazan, is skillfully constructed, but it's based on Dershowitz's book

At the Biograph Cinema, Jean Arthur and Joel McCrea in "The More the Merrier"

about the case, and he's the protagonist—the crusading lawyer searching for evidence of innocence. Silver's Dershowitz seems to be overdosing on proud sentimental Jewishness. (That this is a positive stereotype makes it no less a stereotype.) The direction, by Barbet Schroeder, is assured but often impersonal and emptily energetic. With Glenn Close (very effective as Sunny von Bülow, the comatose narrator), Christine Baranski as Andrea Reynolds, Julie Hagerty (uncredited) as Alexandra Isles, and Stephen Mailer, Annabella Sciorra, Uta Hagen, and Fisher Stevens. Music by Mark Isham.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Quad Cinema, and West Side Cinema.)

The Russia House—Fred Schepisi's movie, based on the novel by John le Carré, is an immensely satisfying entertainment. It's an espionage thriller in which things are much, much simpler than they appear to be—a notion that all but subverts the premises of the genre. As is usual in such stories, there are important secrets up for grabs; here they're contained in a manuscript written by a top Soviet defense scientist, Yakov (Klaus Maria Brandauer). The scientist has tried to put this document in the hands of a man he considers a kindred spirit—an alcoholic, saxophone-playing English publisher named Barley Blair (Sean Connery)—but it winds up in the possession of the intelligence professionals of the C.I.A. and MI-6, who then involve Barley in a complicated espionage operation. In this story, the fine-tuned paranoia of the Cold War seems almost comic. The screenplay, by Tom Stoppard, is cleverly constructed, and Schepisi—a virtuoso at making complex action lucid—gives the picture an even, flowing rhythm; he knows that the thriller elements are a farcical counterpoint to the real story, in which all the thrills are emotional ones. The movie diagrams the moves of the professional-spy game while keeping our attention focussed on the amateurs: Barley, Yakov, and Katya (Michelle Pfeiffer), the beautiful woman who acts as a messenger for Yakov and falls in love with Barley. This is a great role for Sean Connery; he gives his richest, most affecting performance. And he and Pfeiffer are superbly matched, because they're both direct, unfussy actors. (There's nothing devious or self-conscious in their relation to the camera or to each other.) The Russian scenery is lovingly photographed by Ian Baker, and the supporting cast provides small delights throughout. (James Fox and Ken Russell are particularly good.) This movie's professionalism is bracing because the enthusiasm and the generous spirit of the amateur are still in evidence. Also with Roy Scheider, John Mahoney, J. T. Walsh, and Michael Kitchen.—T.R. (12/31/90) (Angelika Film Center, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

The Sheltering Sky—Published in 1949, Paul Bowles' semi-autobiographical account of his marriage fascinated readers by its Olympian closeted tone. Under the novel's vaporousness is a pop theme: what happens to a modern, dissatisfied woman—a New York artist-intellectual—if she's in the Sahara, her husband dies, and she's enslaved in a harem? But this is not simply a male writer's version of a woman's harem-whore fantasy; the wife, Kit, seems to be fulfilling the nature and desires that the husband, Port, cannot fulfill for himself. Bernardo Bertolucci's attenuated film version filters out the pop element that gives the book its bit of kicky horror. The movie is about Kit (Debra Winger) giving over to another way of seeing; it's about the shift in her psyche as she becomes a contented love slave and moves away from the verbal, from definitions and categories and neuroses. Bertolucci appears to have lost interest in pace and excitement and verve; he goes deep into monotony. (The whole thing has the impressively decadent look of an Armani ad.) With John Malkovich as Port (who's full of smug self-hatred), Campbell Scott as Tunner, Jill Bennett, Timothy Spall, and Bowles (at seventy-nine) as some sort of presiding expatriate sage. The script is by Mark Peploe and Bertolucci; the cinematography is by Vittorio Storaro; the music is by Ryuichi Sakamoto.—P.K. (12/17/90) (Murray Hill Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

To Sleep with Anger—A domestic comedy with an unusually dense texture. It's shot straightforwardly, in a style that appears realistic almost to the point of banality, and yet right from the start there's something unsettling about its plainness: Charles Burnett, who wrote and directed, keeps hinting that things are not necessarily what they seem. Gideon (Paul Butler) and Suzie (Mary Alice) are a middle-aged black couple who live in Los Angeles; their roots, however, are in the rural South, and they've retained quite a few of the customs, values, and superstitions of the culture they were brought up in. The story gets going when a friend of theirs from back home appears on their doorstep; they invite him to stay with them awhile, and he does. This unexpected guest, Harry (Danny Glover), turns out to be a gifted confidence man, with a sharp eye for human weakness; he's a grinning, honey-tongued demon. He uses his backcountry wisdom with sinister, obscure intent, for purposes that Burnett, cunningly, allows to remain ambiguous. The presence of Harry gives the realistic surface of the movie a vibrant strangeness; he seems to transform everything that happens in these clean, comfortable living rooms and kitchens into dark rituals performed in the woods in the dead of night. The picture has a risky, complex tone: it's a comedy, because the family's threatened world is set right in the end, but there are moments along the way when the intimations of unseen controlling forces—both in Glover's elegantly suggestive performance and in the eerie, calm precision of Burnett's direction—give us the creeps. Also with Richard Brooks, Carl Lumbly, Ethel Ayler, Sheryl Lee Ralph, Vonetta McGee, Davis Roberts, Sy Richardson, and Devaughn Walter Nixon. There's a brief appearance by the blues singer Jimmy Witherspoon, who performs a mournful, robust version of "See See Rider." —T.R. (11/5/90) (Angelika Film Center.)

The Vanishing—Directed by George Sluzier. In Dutch. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema 12th; starting Jan. 25.)

Vincent & Theo—The director, Robert Altman, and the screenwriter, Julian Mitchell, give us an interpretation of the bond that helps to keep Vincent alive while it tears Theo apart. Vincent is obsessive about his painting; Theo is obsessive about Vincent and about his own inability to sell Vincent's work and help him —he can give him only a pittance. This double Passion-play movie is very different from the other Altman movies (even allowing for how different they are from each other). The theme—the bitter entanglement of art and commerce—is Altman's lifelong theme, and, staying with it strictly in terms of the van Gogh brothers, he's able to release his own feelings about how an artist's frustrations lead him to acts of self-destructive fury —cutting off his ear to spite his face. It's a movie about two sensualists made by a sensualist, who understands that their bond of love of art is also a bond of shared rage at the world of commerce. This daring film works on its own relentless, celebratory terms. With Tim Roth, whose acting is a form of kinetic discharge, as Vincent and Paul Rhys as Theo. The cinematography is by Jean Lepine, the production design is by Stephen Altman, the score is by Gabriel Yared; all three rise to the occasion.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Angelika Film Center.)

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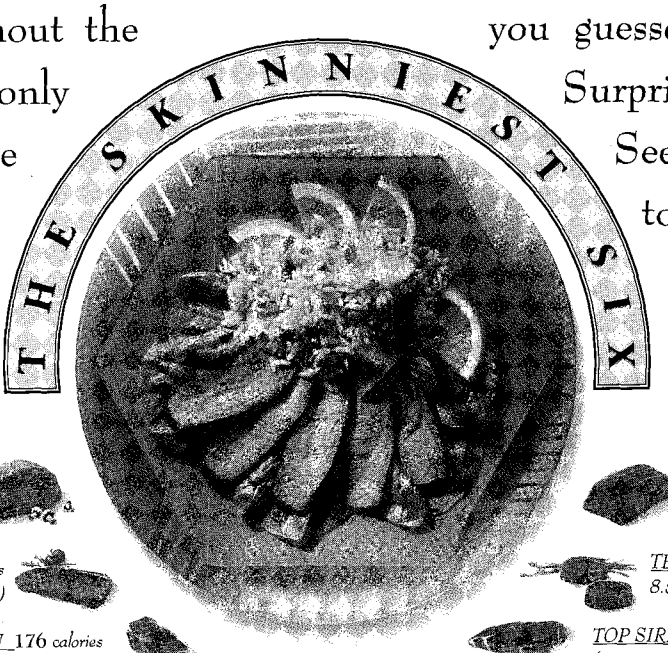
A real Surprise story on beef.

Surprise

Fire up the skillet and man the steak knives. I've traveled down route 258 to Surprise, Indiana, and what did I find? A major surprise. Never have the facts proved so delicious; never have figures looked so good. Surprise: lean, trimmed beef has no more cholesterol than chicken without the skin. And only 1.5 grams more saturated fat—or about 14 calories.** No wonder those Hoosiers are happy. They've also discovered the Skinniest Six, the leanest cuts of beef. So need I say the magic words "marinated sirloin"? Unwrap the steak, toss the salad and call in the army of friends. People in Indiana are already celebrating with—you guessed it—a Surprise party. See you in the next town. BEEF.



ROUND TIP 157 calories
5.9 gms total fat* (2.1 gms sat. fat)

TOP ROUND 153 calories
4.2 gms total fat* (1.4 gms sat. fat)

TOP LOIN 176 calories
8.0 gms total fat* (3.1 gms sat. fat)

EYE OF ROUND 143 calories
4.2 gms total fat* (1.5 gms sat. fat)

TENDERLOIN 179 calories
8.5 gms total fat* (3.2 gms sat. fat)

TOP SIRLOIN 165 calories
6.1 gms total fat* (2.4 gms sat. fat)

Beef.
Real food for real people.

*Source: USDA Handbook 8-13 1990 Rev. Figures are for a cooked and trimmed 3 oz. serving. 4 oz. uncooked yield 3 oz. cooked.
**Here are the respective averages for saturated fat, fat and cholesterol in a 3 oz. serving. Lean beef: 3.2 gms; 8.4 gms; 73 mgs. Skinniest Six Cuts: 2.3 gms; 3.2 gms; 69 mgs. Skinless chicken: 1.7 gms; 6.3 gms; 76 mgs. ©1991 Beef Industry Council and Beef Board.

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

FOR those of us rivetted to our televisions in the United States, the war in the Persian Gulf for the first day or so had an eerie, remote-control quality. At times, it seemed that we were watching a war about technology. The enemy suffered our massive first attack passively, as if in awe. The images being broadcast were bloodless, and the restrictions on reporting helped make the whole thing resemble some elaborate technical exercise. Perhaps this war could be won on computer screens, after all. Then, on the second night, came Iraq's attack on Israel. Casualties, it turned out, were light, but press coverage was extensive, and the remote-control quality of the war began to fade. Real people were weeping and wild-eyed, real buildings were being destroyed. Later, the name and the photograph of the first American soldier killed were broadcast, along with reports that hospitals in Kuwait were overflowing with Iraqi wounded.

Each day in the Persian Gulf seems to bear out Dwight Eisenhower's famous remark "Every war is going to astonish you." As this war becomes something more than a one-sided airborne assault—as it becomes more human—we dread to think what new astonishments await us. In 1936, George Orwell went to fight in the Spanish Civil War, and he wrote about being in the front lines: "At this moment a man, presumably carrying a message to an officer, jumped out of the trench and ran along the top of the parapet in full view. He was half-dressed and was holding up his trousers with both hands as he ran. I refrained from shooting at him. It is true that I am a poor shot and unlikely to hit a running man at a hundred yards. . . . Still, I did not shoot partly because of that detail about the trousers. I had come here to shoot at 'Fascists'; but a man who is holding up his trousers isn't a 'Fascist,' he is visibly a fellow-creature, similar to yourself, and you don't feel like shooting at him."

It was a colossal failure of politics that plunged us into this war. Now that the fighting has begun, all we can do is hope that it ends quickly—and remind ourselves that when the astonishments of war are behind us we will almost certainly be back in the dark and uncertain thicket of Middle Eastern politics.

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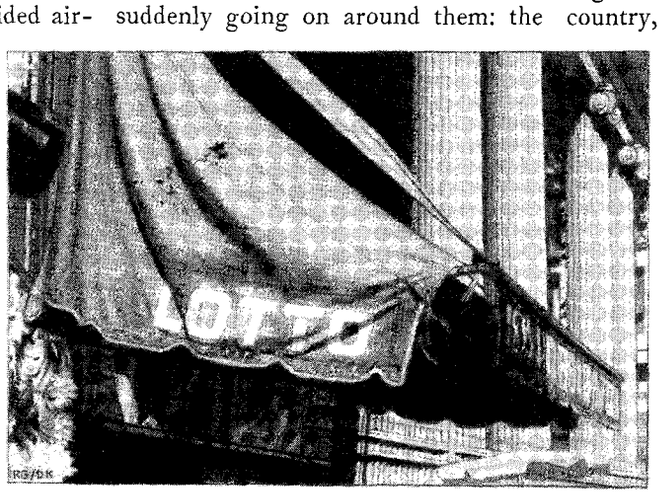
LETTER from a man we know:

The news about the Gulf war came to my house in a telephone call from my son, who was visiting friends in California. He said he'd just been watching a CNN news program that included the voices of three reporters in a Baghdad hotel describing the sights and sounds of the bomber attacks and the anti-aircraft fire that were suddenly going on around them: the sights and sounds of war. While we talked, I turned on a television set, and my son and I exchanged what other news we had just then, and said glum, reassuring things to each other, coast to coast. My son sounded scared, and who can blame him? He is twenty years old. This call, I should explain, was long distance in more ways than one, for I am seventy. The space of years between my son and me has felt odd at times—difficult for both of us on occasion, and often funny—but mostly it's been everyday and insignificant. If anything, it has been a bond, a family quirk we have in common. Last week, it took on a new meaning, because his generation doesn't know what it is like to live in a country at war, while mine, although it had almost forgotten, has been intimate with war in hundreds of ways. Counting the Second World War and Korea and Vietnam, and measuring (as I do in my head) from September of 1939, rather than December of 1941, and leaving out several of our military actions that were skirmishes, and distant wars involving other nations, I find that there have been more than twenty years of mornings when I awakened with the knowledge of being at war. Living in this country, I have been extraordinarily protected from the unremitting violence of this century, yet, along with many Americans my age, I can quickly remember a dozen or more friends who died in war, and twice that number who were wounded or otherwise terribly damaged. I also served three and a half years in the Army Air Forces, almost two of them in the Central Pacific. All this is old hat, of course—a commonplace to millions of us still—but



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what matters, I think, is that this dull, faded, enormous experience seemed about to go out of date for good. With any luck, with a little more (or a lot more) intelligence and courage and patience and imagination all around, my generation and the ones just after it might have taken the knowledge of war with us when we left, and good riddance. Now it's back, and what my son wanted from me on the telephone that night, I realized, was news from a country he had never planned to visit.

I was very close to my son's age when Pearl Harbor came along, and I think I am more frightened for him now than I was for myself back then. War is deadlier than it used to be but, let us hope (let us pray), quicker. Maybe it will miss him altogether. Meanwhile, the other experience of war—the news of it, every morning and night; the awful attraction of it; the technical and sporting jargon; the maps and the weapons diagrams; the rumors and the jokes (those three CNN men, in the much replayed report, couldn't entirely hide their thrill at being in that hotel: there was a courtside, big-basketball-game tone to it); the cheerfulness of officers and experts; the euphemisms ("collateral damage" is brand-new: it means civilian casualties); the zesty little lift to our stride (*We're in a war now: chin up!*) that accompanies us everywhere now that we have one easy thing to think about instead of a thousand difficult or insoluble ones; the reflexive belief in good luck (a quick war, a war won, and nobody's sons in it), and then waking up in the night and thinking about what is really going on, which is the willed imposition of death and destruction on many thousands of men, women, and children, far away—well, all this is experience that my son will pick up very easily indeed. He's already started. He's back from California now, and back in college. He's excited about a new seminar he's taking on the Impressionist painters, but what he, like the rest of us, is mostly studying is war. My own refresher course has begun. In the morning, with my coffee, I watch the bright screen and the maps and the expert with the pointer; I try to remember the new names (Uum Qasr, Khafji, Tornado IDS), and I pay more attention to what's going on than I did a few weeks ago. It's more interesting—let's face it. The old stuff is coming back, too. This morning in my office, I overheard a young colleague of mine talking on the phone—talking about the war. "They said it was more than seven hundred missions," she said, and, walking past her, I murmured, "Sorties, sorties." She'll learn.

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Restoration

IN the basement of the Dakota, there are rows and rows of old doors, lined up like plates in dish racks. There are pieces of baseboard, lengths of cornice molding, and parts of mantels. All these materials were removed from apartments during remodelling projects in the course of many years. Thanks to the foresight of various superintendents, they were deposited in the basement rather than sent out with the trash. Today, they constitute a sort of private salvage yard, to which remodellers working in the building sometimes come in the hope of finding a piece that will complete whatever puzzle they are trying to solve upstairs.

One regular browser in the Dakota's storage rooms is James Boorstein, a restoration-and-preservation specialist who has worked in more than twenty of the building's hundred-odd apartments. Boorstein is thirty-five years old but looks younger. He is slender, has wavy brown hair, and dresses as if for the first day of school. In appearance and in manner, he seems more like an earnest young medical resident than like one of the most painstaking architectural restorers in the country. Recently, his company, which is called Traditional Line, Ltd., has been working on a single apartment in the building, and at times the crew under his supervision has numbered more than thirty craftspeople. Now, with the project in its final stages Boorstein offered to give us a tour.

The first room we looked into was

typical in most ways. Its deteriorated floor (made of oak and cherry) had been taken up, reinforced, and relaid, with some new boards, cut to the exact dimensions of the old ones. The door and its jamb and casing had been stripped of innumerable layers of paint, repaired with dozens of inlaid patches, and finished with shellac formulated according to Boorstein's specifications. The plaster walls had been repaired and then embellished with an ash baseboard and picture rail. A plaster cornice had been run by hand above the picture rail with knives made by Boorstein's crew. The walls and ceiling had been covered with five different wallpapers, selected from nineteenth-century pattern books. A period chandelier had been hung from the eleven-foot ceiling. The only atypical thing about this room was its size: eighteen inches by forty. It was a closet. "The clients told us, 'Don't cut corners just because the door is going to be closed,' " Boorstein explained. As a result, even the cramped hallway by the service elevator is treated as though it were a primary space. "I like to think that there are levels of restoration," Boorstein said. "There is high-quality restoration work, which is expensive, and which you don't see very often. A step above that is museum-quality restoration work. And then there's this, which is really something else again."

Boorstein was born in Manhattan and grew up on Long Island. Mostly by trial and error, he became adept at woodworking and at maintaining sailboats. In college, he majored in art and archeology, and learned welding on the side. After graduation, he moved to New York and worked as an ice-cream-store manager, a furniture refinisher, a plumber, and, intermittently, as a sculptor. Sculpture was his first love, and he sold a number of pieces, but he felt increasingly uneasy in the art world, in part because he didn't like to hustle his work. "I don't feel very comfortable saying to someone, 'I'm a good artist,' whatever that means," he told us. "But I don't mind saying, 'I can take this nineteenth-century brass doorknob and make a copy of it that is literally perfect.' " In 1980, he was hired by the Metropolitan Museum to create an old-looking finish for the new frame of a Tiffany window that was to be displayed in the courtyard of the American Wing, which had just been

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completed. Later, he was asked to help install some of the wing's period rooms, one of which was a re-creation of a parlor in a Greek Revival house, built in 1837, on West Eleventh Street. Partly as a result of his work on that re-creation, he was hired to take part in the restoration of the house—in effect, to bring the original up to the level of the copy. Traditional Line grew out of that project.

Boorstein's company is unusual in that most of its employees were not experienced when Boorstein hired them. He likes to take people who know nothing at all about cabinetmaking, or metal casting, or nineteenth-century wood finishing, and turn them into masters. One of his best woodworkers used to earn his living installing aluminum siding. Another played in a band on a cruise ship. "I hire mostly by attitude," Boorstein told us. "I find that the best employees are simply people who know how to work—the kind of people who can put their minds to almost anything and learn it. Of course, this particular project makes that easy, because people who come in are inspired to do good work by the quality of what was originally done."

Perhaps the most impressive room in the Dakota apartment is the library. Like all the other rooms, it had suffered many indignities over the years. The woodwork was deeply entombed in paint, the outermost layer of which was blue, and at one end of the room was an inharmonious set of plywood-backed bookcases dating from the nineteen-sixties (a decade that created a lot of work for Traditional Line). Boorstein and his crew restored the wainscoting and replaced a mirror missing from the mantel with one they found in the basement storeroom.

A similar level of care is evident throughout the apartment. The bathroom washstands (which are made of purplish marble and are exact copies of Dakota originals) are equipped with unused nineteenth-century shutoff valves that Boorstein found in a shop downtown. Of six mother-of-pearl call buttons in the apartment annunciator—which was used to summon servants, and which, like every other mechanical system in the apartment, has been restored to working order—two are original and four are exact look-alikes, which Boorstein obtained, after a lengthy search, from a German company that makes disks for the valves of high-quality trumpets, among other things.

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At the time of our visit, Boorstein and his crew were working on the last three unfinished rooms. One was the breakfast room, which had served as the kitchen in the apartment's previous incarnation. Its woodwork was undergoing major surgery. Back in the sixties, quite a bit of the woodwork had been ripped out to make room for some white Formica-covered cabinets. We asked Boorstein whether the cabinets had now been sent down to the basement storerooms, on the chance that remodellers in the future might hold a more favorable opinion of plastic laminate. He said "No."

In Motion

"Coleridge is one of my favorite poets, but I've had a hard time finding jugglability in his poems," Cindy Marvell said when we phoned her recently at her place on Riverside Drive. On a happier note, she added that she had worked the kinks out of a three-ball sonnet. This is how Ms. Marvell has been talking since sometime in 1983, the year she hit on the idea of juggling while reciting verse. Her inspiration came when she recalled the opening Chorus of "Henry V" and realized that it was crying out for under-the-leg tosses. Now Ms. Marvell has a repertoire ranging from Shakespeare with plastic Indian clubs to Wordsworth with beanbags. "I think one of the reasons I sympathize with these poets is they're writing about something that's just beyond their reach," she says. "What they're writing about is their frustration. Juggling has a very high level of frustration. You always fear you're going to drop something, and physically everything is beyond your reach most of the time." Not all poetry about the unreachable lends itself to juggling, though. "If a poem has principally color or texture imagery, chances are I can't juggle to it," she says. And the poems have to be short, because long poems make her arms tired. So Dickinson's "A Route of Evanescence" is in, but her "The Lilac Is an Ancient Shrub" is out. Keats's "When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be" is in; his "Stanzas on Some Skulls" is out.

Ms. Marvell is just as picky about other things, such as her last name. The one she received twenty-four years ago from her parents—Friedberg—she rejected a while ago, on the ground that it lacked pizzazz. She considered switching to Rossetti, but decided that it didn't work. Shakespeare? Too obvious. She settled on Marvell, after the poet, even though she does only two poems of his.

Ms. Marvell doesn't look a whole lot like her namesake. She is more on the

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Pre-Raphaelite side, with chin-length light-brown hair, pale skin, and almost-plump arms and legs. Her neck swells a bit at the nape—a common side effect of juggling for several hours at a time, she says. On any given day, you might find her at the South Street Seaport, where she sometimes entertains shoppers, or on the plaza at Lincoln Center. She also performs on cruise ships, in theatres, at theme parks, and in night clubs. But she doesn't do her juggling-and-reciting act, which she calls Poetry in Motion, in most of these places. Audiences tend to get confused when you give them juggling with their poetry, she says. So except at the New York Renaissance Festival, in Orange County, she keeps Poetry in Motion pretty much under wraps, and trots out more for-the-masses stuff. She can balance a ladder on her chin, and she can juggle five clubs, and she can keep aloft peculiar trios—say, a tennis racquet, a torch, and a raw egg. In 1989, she became the first woman to win the Singles Championship of the International Jugglers Association—the jugglers' equivalent of Wimbledon.

Last July, during a visit to the University of California in Los Angeles, she demonstrated Poetry in Motion in a secluded campus courtyard, with us as her audience. She opened with Blake's "Tiger." Two yellow beanbags became the tiger's eyes and, joined by a blue bag, the forests of the night as she recited steadily, in a voice that ever so faintly revealed her New York roots. For Wordsworth's "Daffodils" Ms. Marvell grew lyrical. Five daffodil-colored corduroy beanbags bobbed like popcorn in front of her face and behind her back. Next came "Delight in Disorder," by Robert Herrick. Ms. Marvell produced ten balls and a frantic look. Every line or so, she dropped a couple of balls, stooped to retrieve them, dropped some more. She deadpanned the final couplet, then dumped the entire load.

By this point, a crowd had gathered, and it clapped as Ms. Marvell collected her props for the dagger speech from "Macbeth." "I've got a real dagger at home," she said, and apologized for substituting a club. "Is this a dagger which I see before me?" she asked, dangling the club in front of her nose. Swiftly, she moved into a three-club routine, flipping the clubs into the air with even flicks. "Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible To feeling as to sight?" she said, balancing a club in an eye socket. "I have thee not, and yet I see thee still," she said, and the clubs marched over her forehead like decoys in a shooting range. When Ms. Marvell accidentally dropped a club, she said, "Don't worry—it's only the tragic flaw." In the end, the bell that summoned her to Heaven or Hell was two clubs with a third swinging in between, clapperlike. She bowed, and the crowd applauded. "Oh, thanks," Ms. Marvell said. "Would you like to see a little Hopkins?"

The Battlefield

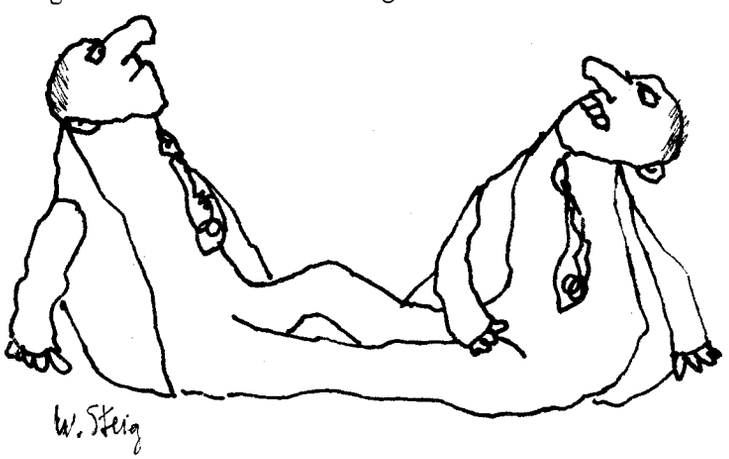
A FRIEND who recently visited Gettysburg writes:

After my brother—a computer scientist who had never before shown the slightest interest in the Civil War—watched all eleven hours of the PBS documentary about it and discovered that a *math professor* is credited with saving the Battle of Gettysburg for the Union, we suddenly had to get in the car and go have a look.

Newsweek described Gettysburg a few months ago as "the most visited battlefield—and the most commercialized." Sure enough, after we crossed New Jersey and followed U.S. 30—the "Lincoln Highway," which first linked New York and San Francisco—to the outskirts of the town of Gettysburg, billboards advertising "General Lee's Family Restaurant" and a "National Civil War Wax Museum" started to flash by, and we couldn't help seeing the three-hundred-and-seven-foot National Tower, a rickety-looking structure that resembles a combination of an old wooden water tower and a power station. Built by local entrepreneurs on land adjacent to the Gettysburg National Military Park, it purports to be "where history comes alive."

But history doesn't need any help coming alive at Gettysburg. It's thick on the ground, and the first thing you forget when you arrive is the idea that what happened at Gettysburg is over. Many of the soldiers, for example, are still there. The National Cemetery at Gettysburg—across from the park's Visitor Center—contains hundreds of gravestones bearing men's names, and also row after row of numbered marble markers, each four inches square and about a foot from each neighbor, representing bodies buried shoulder to shoulder. One such section is headed by a larger marker on which the words "UNKNOWN 411 BODIES" are engraved. There are nine hundred and seventy-nine unknowns in the cemetery. What is not unknown about them is which side they were on. They are Union dead. When the bodies that had been hastily buried all over the area were disinterred a few months later (at the cost to Pennsylvania of a dollar-fifty-nine each) in order to populate the National Cemetery that Lincoln was coming to dedicate with his Address, the Confederate dead—with a few exceptions, including one Mississippi man accidentally interred with a Massachusetts regiment—were left to lie in their shallow trench graves. Despite the plea of George Meade, the Union's commanding general at Gettysburg, that Rebel bodies be laid to rest in the same cemetery as those of his men, they remained outside for some ten years. Then associations of women in the South had them brought back home.

Another tradition that was born with the battle and is still around is that of Gettysburg battlefield guides. They were originally townspeople or local hack drivers who had learned about the



The Inescapable Self

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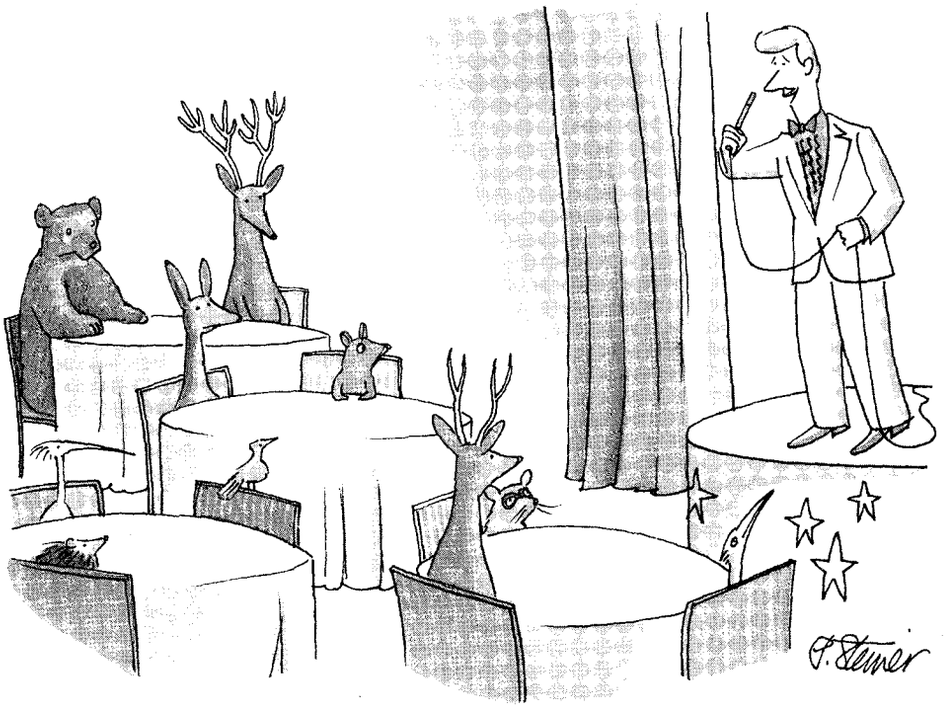
fighting and could help relatives who streamed into the area seeking sons and husbands and brothers. Now, and for the past seventy-five years, they have been regulated by the National Park Service. It seemed to me that our guide, a slight, gray-haired woman named Donna Migdalski, who knew the answer to every question that my brother, his wife, or I asked her, must have once been a history teacher or a Civil War scholar; she was actually a retired secretary from Buffalo. Before she and her husband moved to the area, she had had no particular knowledge of the battle and no experience as a historian, and she doesn't know of any ancestors who fought at Gettysburg. "But when you live in the area you keep bumping into it," she said.

In fact, you can't escape it. Cannons and monuments and memorials and markers line the roads through the park and follow the parallel ridges—Seminary Ridge and Cemetery Ridge—from which the Confederate and Union forces finally faced each other on the second and third days of the battle, and the town of Gettysburg itself is seeded with bronze plaques and with bullet-riddled buildings that served as hideouts and hospitals. During the battle, holes were bored in the first floor of the German Reformed Church, in which the wounded were tended, to let the blood drain out. By 1894, there were some six hundred monuments in the park itself; there are now over thirteen hundred. There are thickets of regimental markers, and at either side of the regimental markers are markers designating their left flank and markers designating their right, until it begins to seem that the war is being fought again, with static marble and granite pieces. By 1895, when the government took over the administration of the park, the Confederates were clearly losing the battle over who would be allowed to put what monuments where. On Culp's Hill, there are thirty-eight Union monuments and one Confederate one. Donna Migdalski said, "The North basically told them, 'You've got your own battlefields—go put your monuments on them.' "

History also lives on in the little things, such as the "Minié ball"—a bullet named for its designer, the Frenchman Claude-Étienne Minié—that Donna Migdalski pulled out of her purse. An inch long, made of soft lead and hollowed at its base, with grooves that the gas of the explosion would push out to fit the inside of the gun barrel, it seemed crude and heavy. In its time, however, it was faster and more accurate than any bullet ever before shot from a gun. "It made a hole the size of your thumb entering," Mrs. Migdalski said. "It made a hole the size of your fist exiting." It was considered the state of the art.

Scholars still argue over Gettysburg, but any child who has ever played King of the Hill can understand the principle of the battle: whoever has the high ground wins. The Union had Culp's Hill, the Union had Cemetery Hill, the Union had Little Round Top. The Union won. Lee, in his one big mistake, had his men leave their own high ground and attack an invulnerable position—invulnerable not because it was the moral or the spiritual high ground but because it was simply high ground.

At a hundred and seventy feet, Little Round Top was one of those pieces of high ground, and, of course, it, too, is still there. Little Round Top was the Union position that gave the former math professor my brother so admired—Brigadier General Gouverneur K. Warren—his finest hour when a fellow-general, Dan Sickles, disobeyed Meade's orders and moved his men away from the hill and into an exposed position in the fields below it. There they suffered more than four thousand casualties in two hours, and Sickles' right leg was nearly shot off above the knee by a six-inch ball. (He instructed the surgeons who amputated his leg to save the leg for him; he eventually donated it to a museum, where he visited it regularly.) Warren, as the chief engineer of the Union forces, had no men to move, but he commandeered some, and the Union retook the hill about ten minutes before the Confederates could get there. Now you can drive up Little Round Top and park your car and walk around. You can stand for a few minutes in the wind on the western rim of the hill, looking down what Shelby Foote, the Civil War historian, has called its "rocky frown," and you can try to imagine climbing it, blinded by smoke, at four-thirty in the afternoon of a sweltering July day, in a hailstorm of Minié balls. You can see more plaques and memorials and cannons. And, looking out over the battlefield, you can see something else that is still a living part of the scene, a hundred and twenty-seven years later: a few black turkey vultures circling over the land below, looking for something dead to eat.



"Hey, welcome to the Catskills. Anyone here from New Jersey?"

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NOWHERE TO RUN

DOCTOR CALLING IT QUITS TO RUN COIN LAUNDRY

He said insurance rates drove him out of his 20-year practice.—*The Times.*

DEAR DOCTOR:

PLEASE don't do anything until you read this.

I'm sending it c/o the A.M.A., so God knows how long it will take to reach you. But I consider it my duty to write, as a colleague who once shared your vision of the coin-operated-laundry business as a refuge from the insurance fiends.

If only life were so simple.

A year ago, I was still practicing general medicine in my home town of Calamine, in upstate New York, administering vaccinations and checkups to patients who thought "malpractice" was a problem with the high-school basketball team. That was what old Doc Williamson always said. He had been our family physician ever since I was a little girl; he helped me get into medical school, and then took me on as his associate. I understood that his professional confidence in me was enhanced by my conservative management of a legacy from my maternal grandfather, a prosperous dairy farmer whose generosity enabled Doc and me to go on feeding, temporarily, those voracious actuarial parasites all too familiar to someone in your shoes, Doctor.

But Doc's nerves were shot. I sent him abroad on a therapeutic mahjongg cruise, and the last I heard from him was a notarized picture postcard (Balinese dancers) giving me power of attorney to dispose of the office and appurtenances when my inheritance ran out. It did, but then I happened to win the New York State Lottery. That fortune, however, was swallowed up before my endorsement on the check was dry, and finally I had to throw in the towel. I sold the office, paid off the loan I'd taken in one last try at satiating the premium-bloated sharks of whom surely I need offer no further description to yourself, and rented a studio apartment in lower Manhattan, determined to change my life.

So believe me, I know how you feel. Twenty years of cliffhanging, strung out on terror and relief, relief and terror—the awful cycle of indemnifying yourself against Mrs. Smith or Mr. Jones, that grateful patient with the billion-to-one chance of blindsiding you as a subpoena-waving freak litigant—and now, freedom! How delightful the prospect!—each day a dance in the embrace of Dame Fortune (for me, Señor Fortune), a delicious creature of spontaneity and not, after all, a greedy monster whose mood swings demand to be bought off with yet another bribe ripped from a mutilated checkbook. Normal human risk—how charming and comfortable it sounds!

I guess I must have walked by that boarded-up cinder-block laundromat on Prince Street ten times before it dawned on me: here was the helping profession of my dreams. The lowered prestige—even a degree of marginality—would be offset by a modest independent income secure from the bloodsuckers I swore I'd never think about again. Life was going to be marvellous.

The premises were hardly palatial compared to the oak-panelled office on Main Street, but the lease was cheap. I could sleep on a cot in the storeroom. The soap venders gave credit, and their experimental products!—a fantastic pharmacopoeia of strange-hued fabric softeners and high-tech stain removers to dispense to my heart's content, even for people using alcoholic beverages while operating the machines.

Small wonder I was flying high by opening day at Mercy Memorial Wash 'n' Dri. Coin slides clicked and agitators hummed, complimentary champagne flowed for everybody trying an experimental product, and during Happy Hour I let children punch the temperature-select buttons at random, just for fun.

And it worked! A sample of the warm response:

DEAR DOCTOR:

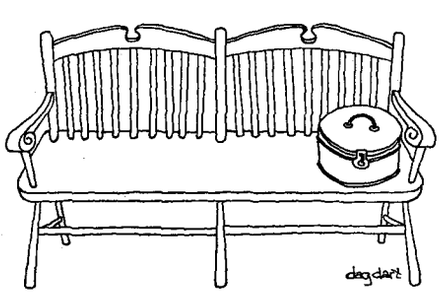
Just a note to let you know how grateful I am for your treatment of my laundry. I was so upset when I learned it would have to go in. I can't begin to describe the dread when I first saw the unmistakable symptoms of soil. My husband and parents were extremely concerned, and it was very kind of you to call them from the pay phone just to reassure them that everything was going smoothly.

Nothing was stolen, and your decisive intervention in an emergency, personally transferring my wash to the dryer while I was shopping, seems to have been the right thing to do. It was worth every penny of the extra fee, as was the impeccable folding. I know you must perform similar operations all the time, but I couldn't have done it better myself, ha-ha!

Much appreciated also was your light-hearted manner during the after-care period.

Well, I sure pray I won't need your services ever again, but if I do (God forbid) you have my eternal confidence.

[Name Withheld in Confidentiality]



SO far, so good.

Around six o'clock this morning, a man raps on the storefront window. Suit and tie, but who knows? Maybe he's trouble, maybe he left a sock in the dryer. Isn't my new life supposed to be all about taking a chance? Surprise, surprise—it's a pitch.

"Lady—or should I say 'Doctor'?" he says. "You're on a suicide course. Destination bankruptcy. And then the inevitable retreat into an even lower-status business, in one of the redlined failure zones along the downward-trajectory channels where no insurance company in its right mind would guarantee you against certain ruin, I guarantee you. Now I will explain the background, even though I don't have to.

"In recent years— O.K., in recent years the whole country has gone nuts, but we limit ourselves, and in recent years more specifically the coin-op-laundry sector has been overrun by unprecedented numbers of doctors and other health-care practitioners. Similar example, the classic Brain Drain of the sixties, when all those academics went into the saw-sharpening business thinking it would be an attractive life style—working with their hands, no more squabbles with tenure committees, dream on—and then found out that in the field of saw-sharpening, as in any other, the rules are brutally dictated by the marketplace.

"Believe me, I personally would love to buy a piece of land upstate and retire by some little blue lake, but here I am in a barrel of rotten apples, God willing.

"This is not to deny for one second that your surgeons, internists, radiologists, and the like are upping the tech-

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nological sophistication at many laundry venues. And welcome aboard! *But*—and it's a big *but*—as the industry thus becomes more scientific, innovative, and humane, I say to you that so too does it pose also hazards unheralded, and not just for the bags of laundry themselves but for those selfsame entrepreneurs who imagine they can waltz carefree, financially secure from protracted and devastating lawsuits at the hands of rapacious attorneys for customers increasingly perfectionistic, affluent, and educated in modern laundry-management standards as reported by the mass media.

"Lest this analysis strike you as alarmist or the economic consequences inconsequential, let me share if I may a few case histories from our claims-adjustment files.

"Item: Since 1988 a Minneapolis broad has had a legal vendetta going against St. Luke's Coin-o-Mat, where despite the twenty-four-hour presence of a certified anesthesiologist, a failure in the oxygen-support system caused her load of heavy-duty work clothes to suffer an irreversible case of mildew.

"Item: In 1989, right here in Manhattan, the owner of Columbia Presbyterian Washaterium got clobbered with a fifty-thousand-dollar fine. Why? He recommended chlorine bleach without advising the client of the right to get a second opinion.

"Item: 1990, out in L.A.—important test case. Some movie star's fancy pillowcases were in a private Intensive Presoak Unit at Cedars of Lebanon Lying-In Laundry. While a consultation was being set up with a specialist from the Delicate Care Institute of Bethesda, the plaintiff was denied visiting privileges over a holiday weekend. Domestics Court awarded emotional damages at a hundred and thirty-five thou per diem. I ask you. Now under appeal, and don't hold your breath."

I'M not deaf to his implied threats, but I feel immune. From a position of control, I choose to go with him to his Wall Street office for what I assume will be a textbook case of high-pressure insurance solicitation. It's important for my continued personal development to confront the beast in its lair.

The office is palatial compared to a laundromat. The crowded reception salon is ebony-panelled, with a marble staircase leading to a balcony ornamented with gilt phoenixes and dragons, encircled by pillars rising from the backs of live bejewelled tortoises—more intimidating than expected, but I can't let that stand in my way now. There's an announcement from a loudspeaker: "Guilty as charged, sentenced to death by beheading!" Somebody screams.

"Erstwhile proprietor of the Good Samaritan Laundromat," my companion whispers, and pushes me up the staircase. "Just answer the riddles as best you can." At this I feel a pang of apprehension, which I embrace. And then I recall the fundamental tenet we learned in medical school—that the seeming infinities of life always converge in a few lucid biochemical structures: there's Boy Meets Girl; there's Dog Bites Man; and there's the Riddle Scene.

And it's a real thrill. I'm at the top of the staircase. The crowd below falls silent. The loudspeaker says my life will be spared if I answer three riddles, or I can go straight to the executioner's block. I take my chances.

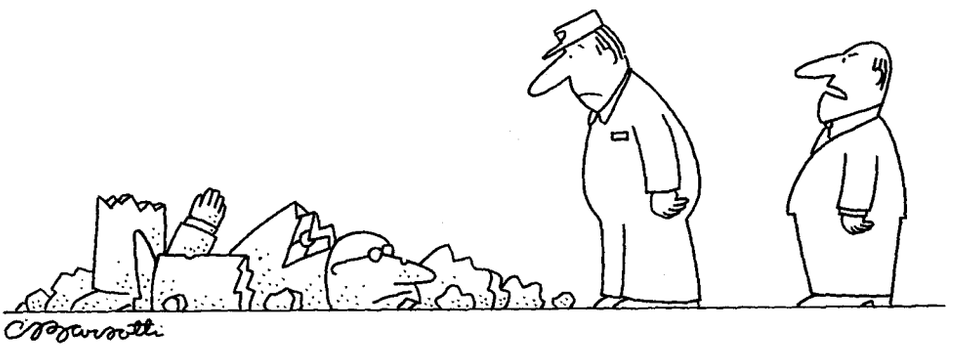
"There is that which is wet yet at the same time is dry—how can such a thing be?"

I'm not afraid of the obvious. "A wash treated with Dewdrop Mildew Retardant," I reply, "turns the dankest basement as fungus-proof as a sunny meadow." The crowd applauds. This is intoxicating.

"Who or what is the following: freezing-cold as ice to the touch but burning within like a hot flame?"

"The face of a doctor who has been contradicted by a second opinion." How I come up with this under stress I have absolutely no idea. Adrenaline is a wonderful thing.

You could hear a pin drop now.



"Don't ask questions, Morton, just get this mess out of here."

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"A winged demon flies over the land"—I can tell already this one won't be easy—"and its name is what?"

Totally unfair! It could be anything! Not enough clues have been given! My face is cold but hot. I take a wild guess, blurting out the first word that enters my head: "Risk! Risk! Risk! Its name is Risk!"

WELL, Doctor, I guessed right. I was free.

So I raised the stakes. I told the loudspeaker I agreed to be executed anyway if it could guess my name within twenty-four hours.

I'm writing this at midnight, cowering in a motel room in one of the failure zones. Where I'll be by morning is another riddle.

Why did I do it? I just wanted to be sure. Does the word "insurance" ring a bell? Because that's the bottom line here, Doctor, let's face it: I am a risk-insurance addict. And so are you. We can't help it. It's an illness. I don't want to be a wet blanket, but take my advice and do not follow in my footsteps. You're only deceiving yourself. You and I are incapable of handling normal human risk; we'll always find some way to escalate it into the same old roller-coaster ride driven by our love-hate dependency on the cruel whims of the very predators we claim to be running away from, and there is no running away. Not by going into the laundry business, or into telemarketing or small-engine repair. Get some help for yourself.

It's probably too late for me, but please, as a professional courtesy, do not give out my name.

—VERONICA GENG

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JOURNALS

FROM THE SIXTIES—II

Mrs. Hammer had begun her monologue. Hammer, who had been reading *Time*, took off his glasses and watched her. Her color was high, her style was vivacious, her eyes flashed. He had said or done nothing to commence the scene. "If you think you're going to make me cry," she explained, "you're mistaken. Oh, I know what you're thinking. I can tell by the way you look. You're thinking that I'm sorry for what I said last night. You think I'm going to ask to be forgiven." She laughed. "Well, I wouldn't ask for your forgiveness if my life depended upon it. You hate me, you loathe me, but I couldn't care less. I used to worry, but I won't worry anymore. There's something wrong with you. I think your mother did something to you, and, of course, you never had a father. I think I know what's wrong with you, although I'd hesitate to tell you to your face. It would seem too cruel. I won't give you the satisfaction of a divorce, because it would upset Dora. If I know one thing, it's that Dora loves me. I've protected her from your drunken rages. I've given her the only loving-kindness she's ever known. Oh, I know you're jealous. You'd like to think she loves you, but she doesn't, and she never will. You think you're a great lady-killer, and I suppose some women see something in you, but the trouble is that you don't have any men friends. Men don't like you. When I took the train on Tuesday all the women on the platform asked me how you were, but not a single man mentioned you. Not one. You're always talking about your sexual needs and desires, but if you spent a little more time out-of-doors you'd be more like a normal man and not so sexy. You never go fishing anymore. Well, you almost never go fishing anymore. Well, when you do go fishing you almost never catch anything. Of course, there are exceptions. Well, I may be wrong about this, and if I've said something stupid, how you'll gloat over it! Oh, look at you. If you could only see how smug you look! If you could only see how happy my little mistake has made you! Well, at last I've done something to please you, I've brought a little sunshine into your life. I wonder how long I'll have to wait before you remind me that the last time you went fishing you caught three trout. Oh, well, I've made you happy. It's still in my power to make you happy." Laughing bitterly, she left the room.

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And in Nailles' happiness, his stubborn insistence upon the abundance of things, his passionate love for Mary Ellen, I seem to sense some obtuseness. How could any woman of character live and breathe in so close, unremittent, and airless a love? "I love you, I love you." He said it every day, seizing her buttocks, thrusting his tongue into her mouth. "I love you, I love you," morning, noon, and night. I sense some obtuseness, but I merely sense it; I cannot see it, judge its altitude or nature as one sees the Atlas Mountains from Gibraltar. He is incurable. When Mary Ellen—or some earlier girl—said that his love was crushing, he would be bewildered. Envy, sloth, pride, anger—all these things could be crushing, but not love. Standing on his porch on a winter night, naming the few stars that he knew for his son and exclaiming loudly over their brilliance and the beauty of the night, he might appear to her to be a fool, an unredeemable fool. "Oh, it's so beautiful out there!" he would say, his breath still smoking, the sharp perfume of cold coming off his clothing. "Why do you cry?" he would ask. "Why do you choose to cry on such a beautiful night?"

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Someone had written something in the fresh snow. Who could it have been —the milkman, a boy, some stranger?

And what would he have written—an obscenity, a calumny? What the stranger had written was: "Hello World!"

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He had a concession at the bowling alley. He called it the pro shop, sold equipment, and drilled and plugged bowling balls with some rented machinery. It was dark that afternoon, but you could see him in the darkness, talking into a wall telephone. He had been talking for three-quarters of an hour. He lowered his voice when I came in, but I heard him say, "She's wild, that one, I was into her three times, and she *buzzbuzzbuzz*." He said he'd call back, hung up, and turned on a light. He was a tall, bulky man with a vast belly—proof of the fact that there is little connection between erotic sport and physical beauty. His thin hair was most neatly oiled and combed with the recognizable grooming of the lewd. On his little finger he wore a flashy diamond, flanked by two rubies. His voice was reedy, and when he turned his face into the light you saw the real thing, a prince of barroom and lunch-counter pickups, reigning over a demesne of motels, hotels, and back bedrooms—proud, stupid, and serene. His jaw was smooth, well shaven, and anointed, a piney fragrance came from his armpits, his breath smelled of chewing gum, and he had the eyes of an adder. He was the real thing.

•

As I wait for the train, a youth in tight white pants sets off the usual alarm signals, but then I notice that he wears the jacket of a school where I am known, where indeed one of my dogs lives. I ask after my friends on the faculty, ask after my dog, and the air between us is pristine and cheerful. It is facelessness that seems to threaten one, strangeness, a sort of erotic darkness, an ignorance of each other, except for the knowledge of sexual desire; but standing in a public urinal and being solicited by a faceless stranger one senses some definite promise of understanding oneself and of understanding death, as if the natural and sensible strictures of society, raised in the light of day,

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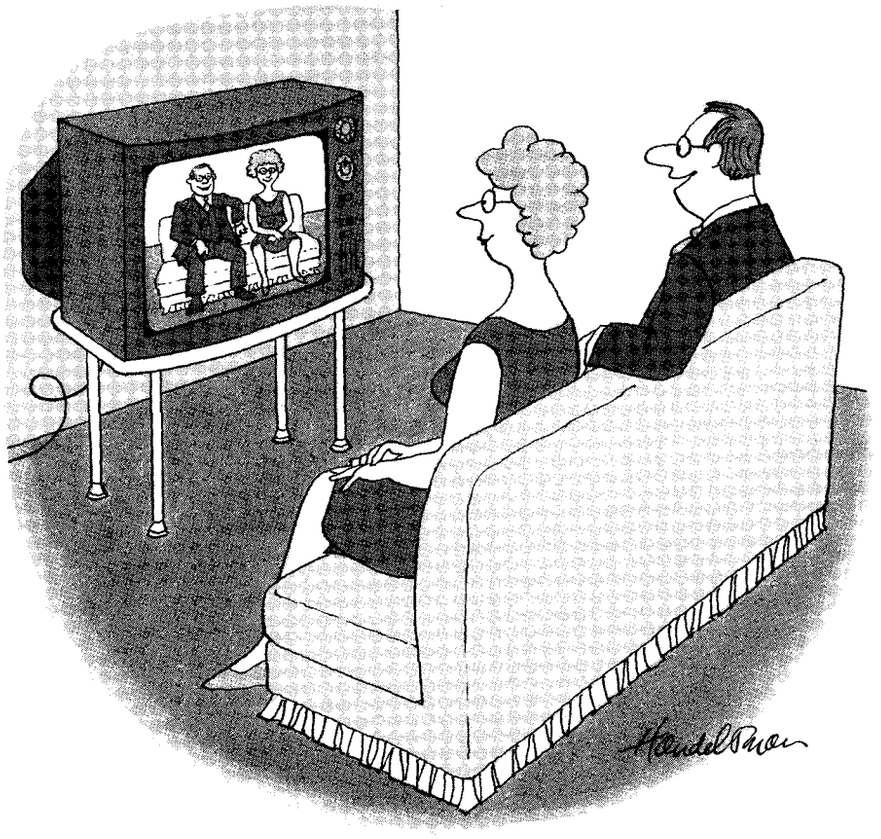
were too heavy a burden for our instincts and left them with no immunity to the infections of anxiety and in particular the fear of death. Run, run, run ballocksy through the woods, put it in the brushes of nymphs and up the hairy bums of satyrs and you will know yourself at last and no longer fear death; but why, then, do the satyrs have an idiotic leer? To have the good fortune to love what is seemly and what the world counsels one to love, and to be loved in return, is a lighter destiny than to court a sailor in Port-au-Prince who will pick your pockets, wring your neck, and leave you dead in a gutter.

•

I carry a heavy suitcase for a young woman—this simplest vision of things—but the suitcase is almost too much for my strength, and I am afraid I will pull my middle out of joint. The shoeshine man's curly head, between my knees, reminds me of T., whose domesticity was clearly rooted in an early knowledge of cold and aloneness. Three days before Easter the city is festive. My shoes are shined, my suit is correct. There are many youths with long and dirty hair, dirty jeans, and white teeth. At the corner of Sixty-third Street and Madison a young man rests on his motorcycle, cleaning his dark glasses. He appears to be out of things, including the rebellion he has joined. Young women with skirts above their knees, old women with top-heavy headdresses of cloth flowers and with wounded feet, a man who has paid his tailor a fortune but walks like a duck. St. Patrick's, which I enter at the elevation of the Host, is crowded. At the St. Regis, hair oil seems to be coming back. Pools of pinkish light stream from holes in the ceiling. I am very tired. In the old place the bartenders used to hook their wristwatches (three) around the neck of a liquor bottle. No more. I wonder if the bartender who serves me served me twenty years ago.

•

On the train home I share a seat with two men I have not seen for fifteen years. They both now have their white hair, as I shall presently. They both wear glasses. One of them has an alcoholic and circulatory ailment that has given his face the colors of an extended bruise. They discuss their lawnmowers throughout the trip. "I got a double-blade, three-horsepower Ajax rotary from Warbin's two years ago. I've got my money back." "Well, I got a single-blade rotary last year, but I'm thinking of getting a reel mower this year," etc. The conversation does not shift, for an hour, from the subject of mowers, excepting to go briefly to fertilizer. Warfare, love, money—the natural concerns of men—are barred from their talk. It is sincere, I expect; it is ceremonial: I suppose they dream of leaf mulchers, gasoline mixes. Their aim is probity, and yet it is the mad who, to cure the wildness of their thought, talk in such rudimentary terms.



"Say, I like this show."

•

Good Friday, and I do not find the day as sombre as I have in the past. Wood doves. A cloudy sky. Travelling acres of sunlight. I remember the Tenebrae being sung in Rome. This early in the year, the churches were still cold and damp. The poetic force of the sense that this world was given to us and given to us in pain. I will not go to church because B. will insist upon giving a sermon, and I will not have the latitude or the intelligence to overlook its repetitiousness, grammatical errors, and stupidity.

•

I wake. My older son has returned safely from school. The trees are full of birds. I mount my wife, eat my eggs, walk my dogs. It is the day before Easter.

•

I watch the young man who drives the drugstore delivery truck come down the street. He has a bellicose and comical heft to his shoulders, as if he were just about to climb into a boxing ring, although his smile is so ingenuous and bright that it seems unlikely that he has ever hit anything. He pushes his neck forward with each step—a little like a drake—and usually, at this time of year, wears a jacket with a hood that lies in a heap on his shoulders. And I think that the writer is, tragically, jockeyed into the position of a bystander. He sees from his window a woman stealing marigolds in the public garden, an old man pissing behind a tree, a

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game of catch in a vacant lot, but some cruel abyss seems to have opened between himself and these simple and natural sights; you can't, after all, repair a carburetor or play football with a pen in your hand and too sharp and critical an eye in your head.

•

I seem, during the drive, grilled on brute worry. I think I will refuse to make long trips. Time seems Procrustean. My watch says eleven. My stomach aches, my scrotum itches, my heart thumps, my breathing is constricted, and my right eye droops. I look at my watch again and it says three minutes past eleven. I seem racked between the hour and the minute hand. I chain-smoke, and at half past eleven I drink some vodka. This must shock the children, but it is my only way of bringing any sense to the hour. New highways spread in every direction, and Mary observes that the Connecticut landscape with its farmhouses and trees seems, by some seismographic upheaval, to have been transformed into the buttes and canyons of another geologic past. She also observes, in the parish development, that all the native trees—apples and maples—have been cut and uprooted and replaced with flowering cherries, trimmed yews, and a lachrymose shrub that seems to produce showers of white tears; thus, we have a landscape that is both melancholy and gallingly artificial.

•

We meet my son, whom I love. The attachment seems to resist any analysis. I simply love him. His skin is clear, his face is muscular; we mostly joke. He speaks of giving up lacrosse because of the killer mentality of the coach. I do not urge him to keep it up, but I would like to. I want him to be distinguished, but I seem to want him to enjoy an undangerous distinction. I do not want him to burn his draft card and go to prison as a C.O. Do I want him to be pure but innocuous, an anonymous element in the stream of time, good and kind and virtually nameless; to embody that passivity we know to be most dangerous? We lunch poorly among the other parents. There is a lady who went to school in Switzerland with Mary. "We were in school in Switzerland together," she says loudly. There are a few Yankee faces, and I consider myself to belong among them, although I may be mistaken. I consider myself distinguished. One could do worse. We attend a parents' council meeting. The face, hands, and legs of Mrs. X are discolored with hooch, and her hands tremble as she reaches for a cigarette. This most strange, hard-drinking world. The chaplain speaks to us on sex education. A rather pale, clear-faced young man whose most memorable feature is his baldness. His baldness seems both active and plaintive: he seems to be losing his hair as he speaks to us. We are addressed on the urgency of sex education, and the matter of educating students is broken up into the biological facts of reproduction and the subjective and emotional aspects of sex. The fact is mentioned—of which I disapprove—that in their early manhood their powers are greater than they ever will be again. Adultery, masturbation, and homosexuality are brought up sketchily. I flinch at the mention of the last, as I always do. Should we educate our children or should we not? A man who has been picking his teeth urges that we first notify the parents of our intention and then, having received their approval, their opinion, we may proceed.

The process will take two years. One lady wistfully objects to the delay. One lady suggests that we all read an article on sex in *Reader's Digest*. It is moved that we send copies of the magazine to all the parents. "You may not agree with the conclusions," says the lady, "but it is beautifully written." It is Mary who observes, looking into these faces, that no one of us is capable of imagining a useful and candid course on the subject. The exaltations, catastrophes, perversions, and mystifications of erotic love are stamped on all these bewildered faces. And the balding advocate of sexual education: what about him? Why is he not married? Why is he so pale? What games does he play?

•

The first of June, and the world that was not mine yesterday now lies spread out at my feet, a splendor. I seem, in the middle of the night, to have returned to the world of apples, the orchards of Heaven. Perhaps I should take my problems to a shrink, or perhaps I should enjoy the apples that I have, streaked with color like the evening sky.

•

Very humid. The air over the Hudson Valley is like a discolored fog. A

"EVERYWHERE I GO, THERE I AM"

Hot days of errands and badges, paper, shrill rage
Of sparrows morning and evening. At sunset
A clearing stroll around the square and down
A steep street twisting to the edge of the narrows,

The brick embankment path and the iron rail
The same as always. The water. All through your body
A steady twinkling of ceasing and being, the cells
That die by millions and replicate themselves

So every seven years your substance is new,
But the same score, the same scar making a faint
Crescent along your temple, always fading,
The blood all different but the same from day

To day, the city birds along the harbor
Working the cracks and hedges, the titan moan
Of a tanker blasting and receding, the range
Of noises a fretwork of the bay, the night.

—Robert Pinsky

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baneful sun is reflected in the window of the hardware store. I sit on the terrace reading about the torments of Scott Fitzgerald. I am, he was, one of those men who read the grievous accounts of hard-drinking, self-destructive authors, holding a glass of whiskey in our hands, the tears pouring down our cheeks. Thunder at three. The old dog trembles, and is so frightened that she vomits. The wind slams some doors within the house, and then I smell the rain, minutes before it begins to fall on my land. What I smell is the smell of damp country churches, the back hallways of houses where I was contented and happy, privies, wet bathing suits—an odor, it seems, of joy. When Fitzgerald drops dead, I burst into tears, as I wept over the account of Dylan Thomas's death. This morning I cannot remember anything that occurred after dinner.

Thinking of Fitzgerald, I find there is a long list of literary titans who have destroyed themselves: Hart Crane, Virginia Woolf, Hemingway, Lewis, Dylan Thomas, Faulkner. There are those who lived, Eliot and Cummings, but there are few. Shall I dwell on the crucifixion of the diligent novelist? The writer cultivates, extends, raises, and inflates his imagination, sure that this is his destiny, his usefulness, his contribution to the understanding of good and evil. As he inflates his imagination, he inflates his capacity for evil. As he inflates his imagination, he inflates his capacity for anxiety, and inevitably becomes the victim of crushing phobias that can only be allayed by lethal doses of heroin or alcohol.

So I go to the shrink. His waiting room has as wide a collection of magazines as I've seen this year; but the waiting room is empty when I arrive, empty when I leave, and I wonder, Is he an unsuccessful shrink, an unemployed shrink, an unpopular shrink, does he while away his time in the empty office like an idle lawyer, barber, or antique dealer? He has large brown or golden eyes, a neat gray suit, and an office furnished with newly upholstered Victorian relics. I suppose some part of doctors' education concerns the furnishing of the consultation room. Do their wives do it? I wonder. Do they plan it themselves? Is it done by a professional? I feel much better after talking with him. He does seem a little angular, a little inclined to contradict and interrupt. He seems at times to do most of the talking. Mary will go see him, and how wonderful it would be if we could clear this up.

•

Casting around drunkenly for some explanation of my grief, I think that perhaps I sought out and married a woman who would treat me as capriciously as my mother did, but a woman with whom I could quarrel as I could not quarrel with my mother. But I am deeply ashamed of myself for quarrelling. I think I am driven to it, I think I am meant to behave contemptibly, and yet I am deeply ashamed. I am deeply ashamed.

•

On the set I see the uneasy—and I think incurable—paradox with which I must live. Would I sooner nuzzle D.'s bosom or squeeze R.'s enlarged pectorals? At my back I hear the word —"homosexual"—and it seems to split my world in two. R., the stand-in, is a well-constructed young man with a vast expanse of tanned, hairless skin, and I feel for him, or think I feel for him, some sad and illicit stirring, but the moment I talk with him—as soon as I feel his place in the world, the quality of his mind, as soon as I can imagine his wife, or his parents, or the room where he sleeps—these unsavory matters vanish. It is ignorance, our ignorance of one another, that creates this terrifying erotic chaos. Information, a crumb of information, seems to light the world.

•

At the Children's Center, I find my older son holding a little boy in his arms. The boy has been crying all day. His face is contorted and weary. He has no tears left, only dry, racking sobs. "It was his first day," Ben said. "He'll be all right tomorrow." And I think of how painfully alien the world can seem when we first emerge from the rooms, and especially the fragrances, of childhood. Invited—or forced—to spend a weekend with Aunt Cora and Uncle Stephen, you find their bathwater, their sweat, the bacon they eat for breakfast all painfully unfamiliar and you are quite literally sick with longing for the

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bathwater, sweat, and bacon in your own cozy home, and in this simple cottage at the edge of the sea you taste for the first time the strangeness of those voyages, battlefields, and hotel rooms in which you will, as a grown man, find yourself frightened and alone.

•

But what I want to tell you about is the shrink. I thought our third interview, this one, would be like the end of a musical comedy. We would embrace, kiss on the threshold of his office, and tie on a can after the children had gone to the movies. His office is furnished with those modest antiques you find in small hotels. His desk, or some part of it, may have come into the world as a spinet. There are colored photographs of his children on the table. Why do doctors always impose on us photographs of their children? He wears, I notice, elk-skin walking shoes, quite new, and light socks with clocks, supported by garters. The gaze of his golden eye is vast and steady. His face might be described as soft. The picture, as I saw it, was that I, an innocent and fortunate creature, had married a woman who suffered from deep psychic disturbances. The picture, as it was presented to me, was of a neurotic man, narcissistic, egocentric, friendless, and so deeply involved in my own defensive illusions that I had invented a manic-depressive wife. The troubles of the psyche were described in a specious jargon. In the space of fifty minutes he said "meaningful" fourteen times, "interpersonal" twelve, "longitudinal" nine, and "structured" two. When I asked Mary if the bulk of our relationship hadn't been happy she merely smiled. I am accused of being jealous of her career. The truth here is that because of my mother's business and my claim to having been neglected I have always been oversensitive to a woman who was less than wifely. He speaks with unamicable reverence, I think, of my stormy father-in-law. He hints, I think, at my humble beginnings, and to tell the truth my father was an unemployed shoe salesman and my mother supported the family with a hole-in-the-wall gift shoppe. Soiled underwear hung from a nail on the bathroom door. These are not all the facts, and my parents were people of some quality, I claim. I think he accepts two fixations for truths. One of them is that I am a friendless man. Mary has always claimed this, and I think it not true. She always felt that if I had a party no one would come. The other fixation is that I detest women.

•

I drink heavily because I claim to be troubled. We talk about the shrink at the table, and I expect I talk with drunken rancor. We go to a third-rate movie and, leaving, I cry, "Why, when I asked if the bulk of our life had not been happy, did you not reply?" "My look," she said, "was my reply." It may have been a sweet smile. I have one drink, no more, and sit on the stone steps. I think myself youthful, even boyish in my misery. I stretch out on the stones, sobbing, until I realize that I am in exactly the position of a doormat.

I sleep in my own bed, although this seems to be an indignity. I wake at dawn, crying, "Give me the river, the river, the river, the river," but the river that appears has willows and is winding and is not the river I want. It looks like a trout stream, so I cast with a fly and take a nice trout. A naked woman with global breasts lies on the grassy banks and I mount her. She is replaced by Adonis, and, while I fondle him briefly, it seems like an unsuitable pastime for a grown man. I keep calling for my broad river, but they seem to have run railroad tracks through the Elysian fields, and I am given a brook with willows. I take a pill this morning, and it seems best for me to take full responsibility for everything that has gone wrong. There is no point in recounting to myself rebuffs, wounding quarrels, etc. One has come through much; one will come through this.

•

In the morning, I am quite shaky and have a flat tire. A garage mechanic who is even shakier than I struggles to change the tire. It takes him an hour, and he mangles the hubcap. When I see him later in the day, he has improved, and I suppose he has a bottle hidden among his tools. I drink Scotch at ten, two Martinis before lunch, and go off to the shrink. His mouth is a little blubbery, and he is not always successful in keeping his hands away from

"And I'll be right back with the conclusion to tonight's story after a few words from Daddy."

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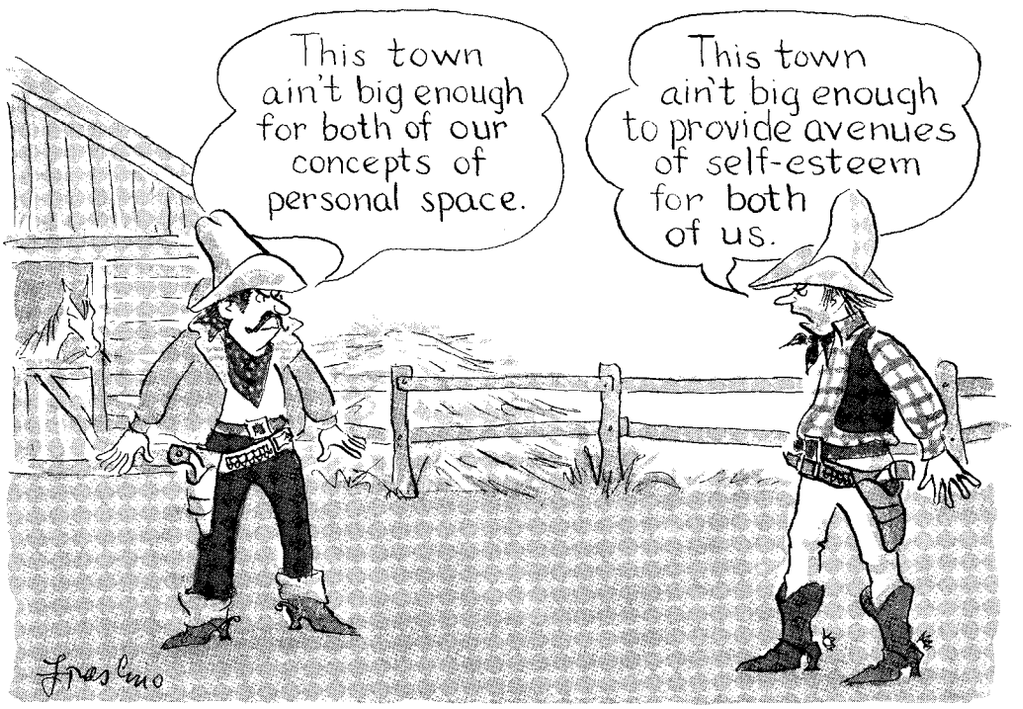
This town ain't big enough for both of our concepts of personal space.
This town ain't big enough to provide avenues of self-esteem for both of us.

MOUTH-OFF AT THE O.K. CORRAL

it. When I sit in the patient's chair, still warm from some other breakdown, he turns the beam of his brown eye onto me exactly as the dentist turns on the light above the drill, and for the next fifty minutes I bask in his gaze and return his looks earnestly to prove that I am a truthful man. I don't understand his methods, and, after drinking, I am not sure that this isn't a waste of time and money. He considers me hostile and alienated, and yet, sitting among his reconstructed antiques, he seems more alienated than I. Does he know anything about music, literature, painting, baseball? I think not. When he brought up the subject of my friendlessness and I said that I had just had a very friendly weekend with H., A., and S., I thought he would cry. He explained that I had developed a social veneer—an illusion of friendship—that was meant to conceal my basic hostility and alienation. He seems, like some illusion of drunkenness, to have two faces, and I find it fascinating to watch one swallow up the other. There was a pause in the conversation, and he pursed his lips as if he had just sucked a lemon dry and asked, "What is blocking you now?" He is very sensitive and utterly humorless, and if I dared complain about his use of "meaningful" I'm sure it would wound and anger him. He wants to go over my childhood, and I'll fire this at him tomorrow. The truth is that I am more afraid of bridges than ever, but I wonder if he has the cure. When I asked him he gave me his saddest smile.

•

I go to the shrink, and while we talk about castration and homosexuality there is some circumspection to our dialogue. I have not clearly stated that I have homosexual instincts and that they are a source of painful anxiety. I think I make too much of this. Since he offers me tentatively the opportunity of a confession, I look forward to making one, but something in his manner or the atmosphere keeps me from blurting out the fact that I am sometimes afraid of being queer. I claim to suffer no more than most men, and yet this claim may be at the root of my difficulties. I know the nature of man to be divided, paradoxical, wayward, and perverse, and yet I seem unable to live peaceably with this fact when it is applied to me. My wish to be a simple, natural, and responsive creature seems to be incurable. The shrink seems to have made the conflict obsessive, or pushed it in this direction. Lying in bed, I wonder if I can get it up when the time comes. This is absurd. I cannot evoke the fragrance, the shapeliness, the stirring in my bowels, and yet I torment myself; I charge myself with choosing a girlish boy instead of a lovely and passionate woman. It would be very easy to make out with a girl-boy, but ease is not what one seeks—although I have a sneaking suspicion that it is. All one needs is courage, vitality, and faith, and I very often have all three.

What I need is hopefulness, zeal, vigor, and deep love, and to complain to a shrink about my wife's conduct in bed seems to be the opposite of all this. Complaining seems to be a mode of despair. I cannot bring myself to say what happened, because it would seem to jeopardize the possibility of making out tonight. I want to love and be loved, to be forthright and manly, and I won't accomplish this by snivelling and whining in an air-conditioned consultation room with disinfected antiques. However, I do. But the shrink and I seem to be at cross-purposes. I think he works within a set of rigid and mysterious preconceptions. Who profits by concluding that Mrs. Zagreb is my mother? He accuses me of making a goddess of Mary, and I tell him that of course she is a goddess. Mary and I go to a movie, "Modesty Blaise," which I consider expert, hilarious, and witty. I am happy and excited, and take two bourbons to calm myself; but in bed I go soft, and when I ask for some assistance it is given so halfheartedly that we part. Now perhaps we are coming into the borders of a dark country, but it may be a country of my making. I must avoid getting gin-mean.

•

I want a life of impossible simplicity. I want to make out in the peaceable gray light, either of dawn or of the rain. I want all homosexuals and other disconcerting types to be concealed from me. I want no one to suffer pain or death, to be poor or cold or humiliated.

•

I dream that a lady, looking at my face, says, "I see you've been in the competition, but I can't tell by your face whether or not you've won."

•

I think I return to the doctor today, and I think I have nothing to tell

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him. But what about the bitter quarrel on Friday night when I proposed a divorce and was accepted? What about our passionate reunion on Saturday afternoon, and what about the fact that I was impotent on Saturday night? What about the fact that I seem to be at sea? This morning, Mary is very brisk and goes off to get the maid before the maid will be ready. But what harm is there in this? I feel, on Monday morning, very sad. If I have been mean, I cannot remember my meanness, because my recollections are damaged by alcohol. I want to love and be loved, and the curtness I imagine myself to receive wounds me deeply. But that I am so easily wounded seems to be where the trouble lies.

•

I would like to come clean on the matter of homosexuality, and I think I can. I think I can see clearly the history and the growth of my anxiety. There was the clash between my instincts and my pleasures, my mother's spectacular ambivalence and my father's fear of having sired a fruit. The climate was anxious. In my determination to become a man, I felt it was my duty to respond to females. My responses were natural and strong, but they were at times short-circuited by this concept of duty. Homosexuality seemed to me a lingering death. If I followed my instincts I would be strangled by some hairy sailor in a public urinal. Every comely man, every bank clerk and delivery boy, was aimed at my life like a loaded pistol. In order to prove my maleness, I resorted to such absurd strategies as not letting my eye rest on the woman's page in the morning *Times*. But now I seem to see it clearly. Homosexuality is not, as I live, an evil. The evil is anxiety, an anxiety that can take on all the shapes and colors of hopeless passion. I trust I will not have to prove this in practice, and at this point some vagueness enters my thinking. But I consider now that if I did bounce L. it would not be the abdication of my character and the destruction of an old friendship.

•

A lonely man is a lonesome thing, a stone, a bone, a stick, a receptacle for Gilbey's gin, a stooped figure sitting at the edge of a hotel bed, heaving copious sighs like the autumn wind. Would Hammer be one of those men who, having made an unhappy marriage, lack the vitality and the intelligence to extricate themselves? His only emotional life is the invention of blondes. His only sexual life is jacking off. He takes his blondes aboard ships and planes; shows them the splendors of Paris, Rome, and Leningrad; orders them four-course meals in restaurants; deliberates over the wine; takes them for walks; writes them checks; buys them jewelry; and falls asleep with their fine, stiff pubic brushes against his naked hip. He is very careful to brush his teeth and shave before making love. Would Mrs. Hammer say, "You're a doormat, you're a henpecked doormat, and don't try to blame me. I'll bet you're the kind of man who thinks that someday, someday, some slender, well-bred, beautiful, wealthy, and intelligent blonde will fall in love with you. Oh, God. I can imagine the whole thing. It's so disgusting. She'll have straight hair and long legs and be about twenty-eight, divorced but without any children. I'll bet she's an actress or a night-club singer. That's about the level of your imagination. What do you do with her, chump, what do you do with her beside tying on a can? What is a henpecked doormat up to? Do you take her to the theatre? Do you buy her dinner, jewelry maybe? Do you travel? I'll bet you travel. That's your idea of a big thing. Fourteen days on the Cristoforo Colombo, tying on a can morning, noon, and night, and drifting into the first-class bar at seven in a dinner jacket. What a distinguished couple! What shit! But I guess it would be the Flandre, some place where you could show off your lousy French. I suppose you drag her around Paris in her high heels, showing her all your old haunts. I feel sorry for her; I really do. But get this straight, chump, get this one straight. If such a blonde showed up, you wouldn't have the guts to take her to bed. You'd just moon around, mushing her behind the pantry door, and finally deciding not to be unfaithful to me. That's if the blonde showed up, but no blonde is going to. Did you hear me? Hear this! No such

BLUE SPRUCE

My grandfather worked in a barbershop
smelling of lotions he'd slap on your face,
hair and talc. The black razor strop

hung like the penis of an ox. He'd draw
the sharp blade in quick strokes over
the smooth-rough hide, and then carefully

over your face. The tiny hairs would gather
on the blade, a congregation singing
under blue spruce in winter,

a bandstand in the center of town
bright with instruments, alto sax, tenor
sax, tuba or sousaphone—the bright

oompah-pahs shaving the town somehow,
a bright cloth shaking the air
into flakes of silvering hair

floating down past the houses, the horses
pulling carriages past the town fountain,
which had frozen into a coiffure

of curly glass. My grandfather had an affair
with the girl who did their nails
bright pink, bright red, never blue,

perhaps as the horses clip-clopped on ice

• •

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outside his shop, his kisses
smelling of lather and new skin—

when she grew too big and round
with his child, with his oompah love,
with his bandstand love, with his brassy love,

and the town dropped its grace notes
of gossip and whispered hiss,
he bundled her out of town

with the savings which should have gone
to my mom. But how could you hate him?
My mother did, my father did,

and my grandmother, who bore his neglect.
When she was covered in sheets
at her last death,

he flirted with the nurses, bright
as winter birds in spruces
above a bandstand—

I'll always remember him in snow, a deep lather
of laughter, the picture
where he took me from my mother

and raised me high, a baby, into the bell
of his sousaphone, as if I were a note
he'd play into light—

—Stephen Perry

•

blonde is going to show up. There isn't any such blonde. You're an old man with a five-tooth bridge, bad breath, and a hairy belly, and you're going to be lonely for the rest of your life. You're going to be lonely for the rest of your life.

"Well, why don't you say something? Cat get your tongue? Sticks and stones? Why don't you say something? I suppose you think you're saintly to take my abuse quietly. I suppose you're turning the other cheek. Well, if there's anything that can drive a good woman to drink and fornication it's having to live under the same roof with a bloody phony saint. And a big drink is what I'm going to have as soon as I get home."

•

To be stymied sexually, wherever the blame may lie, usually means that I am stymied in my ability or willingness to tell stories. And it seems, this morning, that I have spent half of my married life in such a condition. There are the stories and characters I have invented to relieve myself of some of this —Betsey, Melissa, "The Chimera," "The Music Teacher"—there are hundreds of pages dealing with the lovely woman from whose face the light has gone. H. says that all the fault is mine, and I will willingly take much of the blame, but I would be a fool to take it all.

•

Somewhere in the turnings of sleep I seem to recuperate, seem to bask in the feeling of love again—limber, able, and cleanly. The woman is Barbara, someone I have never seen, and she seems spread out beneath me like a sheet. I seem to hear the voices of my three children, clear and tender. Now when I summon up my girls they arrive willingly. Narcissus has vanished. I think this is a disappearance, not a repression.

•

Mr. Hitchcock, on the other hand, took each morning a massive tranquillizer that gave him the illusion that he floated, like Zeus, in some allegorical painting, upon a cloud. Standing on the platform waiting for the 7:53, he was surrounded by his cloud. When the train came in he picked up his cloud, boarded the no-smoking coach, and settled himself at a window seat, surrounded by the voluminous and benign folds of his tranquillizer. If the day was dark, the landscape wintry, the string of little towns they passed depressing, none of this reached to where he lay in his rosy nimbus. He floated down the tracks into Grand Central, beaming a vast and slightly absent-minded smile at poverty, sickness, the beauty of a strange woman, rain and snow.

•

It is early autumn. The leaves are not brilliant, but have enough color to make the wooded hills seem lambent, rising. It is the double meaning of light. On the summits of the hills, doom-crack missile-launching stations bloom like mushrooms. *Aurora gloria.* I count only three fishermen on the banks of the river, abandoned by its sturgeon, shad, shellfish, mallards, and swans. The paper says that raw excrement from the city travels on the tides as far north as Yonkers. The tide is out, revealing, like a fallen sock, the river's shank. I pound around the streets, not quite free from a sense of economic and sexual contest, but hopeful.

•

"You're so unhappy," she said, "that —I suppose—you have to be cruel."

"I'm not cruel," he said. "You really can't call me cruel. I always feed the cats and the dogs. I always put seed in the bird-feeding station."

•

Autumn leaf fires. The cook is drunk. Children make a barricade of leaves. Frost has slaughtered the begonias.

•

To confront, with forgiveness and compassion, the terrifying singularity of my own person.

•

The high polish of these splendid autumn afternoons puts me at a loss. I don't like to return to the office, and I seem to have no chores around this

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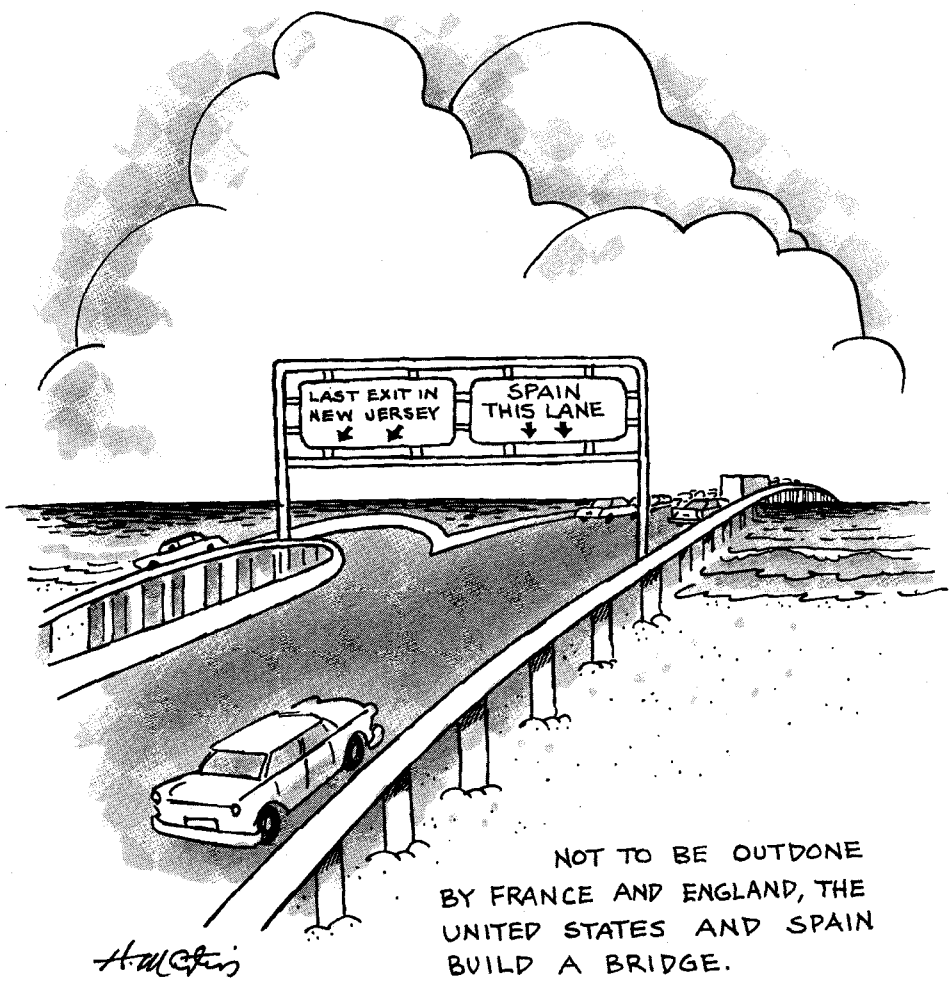
place. Walking alone can be a bore. The Ralph Ellisons stop by, having returned from Oklahoma City. He speaks of the Negro slums, now demolished, in lyrical terms. A source of vitality, music, violence, and sex. He has returned to all his old haunts—drugstores, cousins, friends, and saloons—and found this review of his past a deep kind of discovery. "It was wonderful," she says. Thank you. I am, like Z., obsessed with my unhappiness, and seeing how easy they are with each other deepens my misery.

I read some "Lolita," which seems to me a little putrescent. Here is the inalienable fascination of perversity—known, I think, to all men. At dinner we talk about Horace Gregory, and the conversation seems warm and easy. I should bring more warmth and patience to the table. But something goes blooey, and I am too drunk to recall the collision. I say, foolishly, that I have done her a favor. Mary says that she hates to have me do anything for her or the children because I gloat over their dependence upon me. She says that I gloated over driving Ben to work this summer and that I reviled Susie for her extravagances. I don't think I really gloat, but it can be observed that she thinks I do. This would explain why she is unwilling to let me get her a cup of tea when she is sick, why she is unwilling to spend my money. Things worsen and grow ugly. I ask what kind of a woman is it who, being approached tenderly, says that she has to put the potatoes in the oven? She says that she can't bear to be gentled by an impotent man. I ask her what made her think I would be impotent, and she says, "You'd better be careful, you'd better be careful." I go upstairs and watch an old movie. We meet in the bathroom, where I ask for some gesture or token of love, some glance, and she makes a face. Then, in a rage, I shout at her in full voice, "You cannot make a grimace when someone asks for love." Just before dark I take her in my arms. I am sick with a need for love. She lets me hold her for a few minutes. I say that I will promise never to shout at her again if she will promise not to make faces at me. She says that she will make faces at me when she is provoked. The worst of it is that my son must hear this abuse, as I heard my parents quarrel when I was a child. I think I and my drunkenness are not completely to blame. Her attitude toward me does not seem to parallel the facts, to shift and change as events shift and change. She seems prejudiced, and her prejudices seem to come from a time of life before we met. I do not often gloat over things done. When she speaks of my impotence I say that I am not impotent with other women. This is a damned lie, since all I've done is neck with other women. I love her; she is really all I've ever known of life, but I think that to be independent would not kill me, although there is the problem of drunkenness. I cannot ask for forgiveness—who is there to forgive me?—but I can make an effort not to shout within my son's hearing. I cannot judge whether or not I'm drunk, but any resolve to drink less would be hypocritical. I am now, at ten o'clock, thinking of a gin bottle. I wish to be loving and simple and loved, and I will remain hopeful.

•

Shaken with liquor, self-doubts dimmed slightly by a Miltown, I board the nine o'clock. I am in misery. Every man on the train seems richer, more virile and intelligent than I, and there are no beautiful women. The man in front of me seems to be a Magyar; an identifiable racial type. The skin is dark; the eyes are brown; he is bald with a thin fringe of gray hair, and he has the kindly smile of an old friend, who is dead. He does not resemble my friend at all, but he seems to have the identical smile, as if this expression—this transparency—were a quality of light and existed independently of one's features. I am shaky and constipated. I get a shoeshine and decide that I am too far gone to sit in a barber chair. Walking and air will help, and I start pounding up Madison Avenue. I notice mostly that the girls are pretty and that the bars I pass are shut. I admire Breuer's new building and go to see P.'s sculpture, which I find less vigorous and exciting than I had hoped. Then down Madison Avenue I pound, and you may have seen me at quarter after eleven, trying the door of each bar I passed and finding them all locked, the night-light burning, the bottles behind bars. I go all the way back to the Biltmore to find an open bar, and



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"Harold, are my knees bumpy?"

•

then wonder, Will my shaking hands be able to get a glass to my mouth? I manage, and after two drinks am well enough to sit in the barber chair. I am recognized; I speak Italian; I observe that in the forty years I have been coming here half the barbers have died. I discharge my duties at the Century and take a bus downtown. This is the first time I have ridden a bus in many years and I seem, through inexperience, to suffer a form of sexual nakedness. Glancing into the eyes of a strange woman, I am provoked. I jog home on the local, falling asleep over a copy of *Life*. Businessmen sleeping on trains appear, whatever their condition may be, discouraged, helpless, and lost. There is a pretty girl across the aisle, and I seem to inhale her. I can't see enough of her, and she makes me both happy and languorous. I go to bed at half past eight and have a horrendous dream in which Mary is made president of the college. There is a hint of ruthlessness here. I remember watching her father seize a position of power. I retaliate by having a homosexual escapade, unconsummated, with Ronald Reagan. Walking on Madison Avenue, I had been tormented with the thought that my sins would be discovered, although I claim to have committed no sins. My children will vilify and disown me, my loving dogs will bark at me, even the cleaning woman will spit in my direction. Where is mercy, where is forgiveness? It is everywhere.

I have dreams of a density I would like to bring to fiction. We are summering in Nantucket, and I write a letter to some friends in Texas who are planning to visit us. I give them detailed instructions on how to reach the island, using both an atlas and a road map. A woman reminds me that she wore my old clothes during the bombing of Britain. At daybreak, I feel unloving and make no passes and invent a fantasy in which Mary says, "I think I had better tell you that B. and I are in love. I think you ought to know. X has refused to give him a divorce." I am bathed in self-pity, limpid as gin. But how can I gentle a woman who treats me with scorn? Remain hopeful and keep your pecker up.

•

All Hallows' Eve. Some set piece about the community giving a primordial shudder, scattering the mercies of piety, charity, and mental health and exposing, briefly, the realities of evil and the hosts of the vengeful and unquiet dead. I see how frail the pumpkin lanterns are that we light on our doorsteps to protect our houses from the powers of darkness. I see the little boy, dressed as a devil, rattling a can and asking pennies for UNICEF. How thin the voice of reason sounds tonight! Does my mother fly through the air? My father, my fishing companions? Have mercy upon us; grant us thy peace! Although there seemed to be no connection, it was always at this season that, in the less well-heeled neighborhoods of the village, "For Sale" signs would appear, as abundant as chrysanthemums. Most of them seemed to have been printed by children, and they were stuck into car windshields, nailed to trees, and attached to the bows of cabin cruisers and other boats, resting on trailers in the side yard. Everything seemed to be for sale—pianos, vacant lots, Rototillers, and chain saws, as if the coming of winter provoked some psychic upheaval involving the fear of loss. But as the last of the leaves fell, glittering like money, the "For Sale" signs vanished with them. Had everyone got a raise, a mortgage, a loan, or an infusion of hopefulness? It happened every year.

•

I belt down a great deal of bourbon before lunch, futz around. Buy flowers for Mary. The simple pleasure I seemed to take in flowers is vanished. Oh, well. We go—a little rain is falling—to see Pasolini's "St. Matthew." I have been told that Pasolini is homosexual, but he photographs the faces of his people lovingly and beautifully, and his sexual life is no affair of mine. As we leave the theatre, it is raining heavily, and I throw my jacket over Mary's shoulders and feel myself to be seventeen, eighteen, no more. At home I drink some whiskey and brood. I am sad; I am weary; I am weary of being a boy of fifty; I am weary of my capricious dick, but it seems unmanly of me to say so. I say so, and Mary most kindly and gently takes me into her arms. I don't make out, but lie there like a child. Patience, courage, cheerfulness.

So with one word, one word, she mends the wreath of hair. Oh, mend

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the wreath of hair, make the rain fall, scatter the ghosts. And I seem, most unjustly, to accuse myself.

So I am gentled and gentled and gentled.

•

When Deasey was a kid he liked to dress up in girls' clothes, and in his sophomore year at college he had a love affair with his roommate. This was gratifying sexually, but it corresponded in no other way to what he expected from love. His roommate was comely and athletic. Deasey was puny. His roommate claimed that he did what he did only as a convenience or a favor. Deasey was the lover, his roommate was the beloved, and he was a demanding, cruel, and callous beloved. After his graduation, Deasey went on to New York and got a job. His homosexual or narcissistic instincts were estimable, but he was unwilling or unable to enter into another love affair as painful as the affair in college. He went to a psychiatrist named Jacks three times a week for five years, trying to understand or cure or alter the clash between his homosexual instincts and the desire to marry and raise a family. At the end of five years, he met a young woman whom he loved. Jacks was doubtful about Deasey's ability to marry, but he went ahead in spite of Jacks and seemed very happy—he seemed ecstatic. He loved his wife, he loved his way of life, he loved his children, and yet all of this had not changed his narcissism. In trains, public places—everywhere—he seemed to seek out men younger than he, whose features and tastes corresponded in some way either to his own features and tastes or, perhaps, to those features and tastes that he lacked when he was young. He went to another psychiatrist—Jacks had died—who encouraged him to sublimate his narcissism in various ways. He fell in love with a young neighbor—a married man with two children. He desired the neighbor ardently, dreamed of him, and tried to sublimate this by helping his friend. He got him a job, got him a raise, and advised him on everything including the purchase of a new oil-burner. He did not admire his image in the mirror—he could see clearly how gaunt and lined his face was—but he loved it more than any other face that would appear in his lifetime, and boarding a train he would look around for some young man reading a paperback copy of Dylan Thomas whom he could help. There always seemed to be some young man around the house receiving help. Deasey never touched them, and if they touched him, as they often did, he would put them away gently, half faint with desire. I only mention this to point out that everyone's life is not as simple as yours.

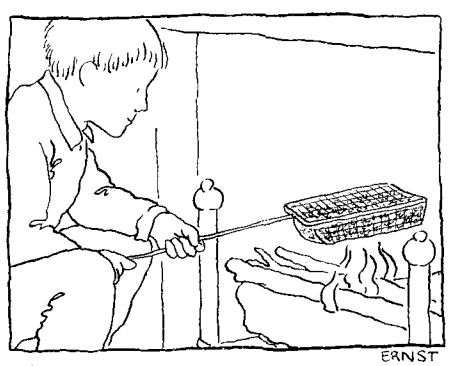
•

Wet lunch at the club. Taking a taxi home I ask the driver to leave me off at Hawkes Avenue. He thinks I'm crazy. "Let me take you to where you've paid to go," he says, but I ask him to let me off, and walk home. It is very cold and the cold air seems as stimulating as gin. I pound along the road, dragging the heels of my loafers with pleasure. Why is this? It is the kind of irresolute or sloppy conduct that used to trouble my father. I think I enjoy dragging the heels of my loafers because it was something he asked me not to do, thirty-five years ago.

Mary is resting in bed and, fully dressed, I lie down beside her and take her in my arms. Then I experience a sense—as heady as total drunkenness—of our being fused, of our indivisibility for better or for worser, an exalting sense of our oneness. While I hold her she falls asleep—my child, my goddess, the mother of my children. Her breathing is a little harsh, and I am supremely at peace. When she wakes, she asks, "Did I snore?" "Terribly," I say. "It was earsplitting. You sounded like a chain saw." "It was a nice sleep," she said. "It was very nice to have you asleep in my arms," I say. "It was very, very nice."

•

Fend, fend, fend off the gin with the New York *Times Magazine* section. My resolve collapses at eleven. I walk the boys to the archery range, set up a target in the orchard. Sneak two bourbons and read some more of the *Times*. An article in defense of the Asiatic war. The timbre of the man's intelligence offends me to the point of desperation. The metaphors are vulgar, the syntax is evasive, the analogies are massive and dishonest, but what I experience most is a sense of alienation and despair: the knowledge that in any conversation it would be impossible to impress—let alone persuade—the stranger with one's own opinions.



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I take Mrs. Zagreb out to lunch. Oh what a rascal! I think she's a little crazy, but the effect on me is stimulating, and we both chat excitedly about our terribly interesting lives. We could talk all afternoon. She let the cabdriver (very good-looking in an Italian sort of way) buy her a drink and the bartender (he must have been good-looking; he's very tall but he's pretty old) drove her into New York. I take a nap, and wake with a stupendous feeling of magnanimity and love. Mary is upstairs, correcting papers in bed, but when I feel in her pants she puts me off. I don't care. I sail off to the florist's and buy flowers for Mary and Zagreb, thinking two women are better than one. What a rascal, what a libertine! Z. gives me a French kiss. Swept along on my magnanimity I walk the dog over the hill, noticing how like flowers (pansies) are the dog's tracks. A leaf, some leaves. I do not much lift my eyes to the clouds from whence cometh this, the light of this winter afternoon.

•

It seems—or it seems to me—that it is terribly difficult for Mary to thank me for anything. When I gave her an electric typewriter for Christmas, she refused to open it, look at it, or acknowledge it in any way. She not only did not thank me; she did not speak to me. Exactly eleven months later, she came to me in the dining room, gave me a kiss, and said, "Thank you for the lovely, lovely typewriter."

•

The house was dark, of course. The snow went on falling. The last of the cigarette butts was gone, the gin bottle was empty, even the aspirin supply was exhausted. He went upstairs to the medicine cabinet. The plastic vial that

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used to contain Miltown still held a few grains, and by wetting his finger he picked these up and ate them. They made no difference. At least we're alive, he kept saying, at least we're alive, but without alcohol, heat, aspirin, barbiturates, coffee, and tobacco it seemed to be a living death. At least I can do something, he thought, at least I can distract myself, at least I can take a walk; but when he went to the door he saw wolves on the lawn.

•

The fact of the passage of time seems, to my great surprise, a source of sadness. One can put a sort of varnish on the facts, but one cannot change them. In the space of a day you find that the barber, bartender, and waiter who have served you for twenty-five years are all suddenly dead. Waking in high spirits is a matter of stepping out of one's dreams into an aura of love and friendship, but to take a roster of one's most vivid friends is crushing. X sits in a wheelchair being read to by a nurse. Y cruises the Mediterranean in his twin-diesel yacht, suffering terribly from boredom. M. is a reformed alcoholic with a damaged brain, trying to sell magazine subscriptions over the telephone. A. is an unregenerate alcoholic, bellicose, absent-minded, drunk for three and four months at a time. These were the men and women one rose in the morning to meet, talk, walk, and drink with, and nearly all the brilliant ones are gone. I think of Cummings, who played out his role as a love poet into his late sixties. There was a man.

•

Our conversation goes, by my account, like this. Me: Good morning. She: Good morning (*faintly*). Me: May I have the egg on the stove? She: You know I never eat eggs. "Goodbye," I say, after breakfast. (*Silence.*) "Would you like a drink," I ask at five. "Yes, please." "This book is very interesting," I say. "It must be," she sighs. I chat during dinner, but she remains silent. These are the words we exchange during a day.

•

Bright stars and intense cold when I go to bed; in the morning the bluish darkness of another snowstorm. The usual Friday festivities. I take Mary to

"It was a nice Christmas—I gave him a dog whistle, he gave me a police whistle."

• •

see "Zhivago." It would be fun to parody the screenplay. The battlefield scene ends with a closeup of a pair of eyeglasses. Not broken. There are many such cues: fur hats, flowers. Cuts from opulence to poverty. A rich and loving young couple ride their sleigh through the snow. Camera up to a lighted candle in a frost-rimmed window. Dissolve frost, and we see a very poor and loving couple. Terrible music, and all the sets are overdressed. Overdecorated. A ballroom frilled with drifting snow. The passengers crowded into a freight train for days have gleaming linen, lustrous hair, brilliant complexions. Watching the hero and his blonde in bed, I think how long it's been since I've been involved in some volcanic, unseemly, irresistible, and carnal affair. Is this age? Will I never be caught up helplessly in the storms of history and love?

•

Palm Sunday. Ten above zero. I get to church before the doors open, and am badly chilled. This, I suppose, because I've harmed my circulation. Miss F. has arranged the palm fronds in a fan above the purple cloth of Holy Week. She sits at a distance from her father. There is a blond young woman ahead of me who has a nervous habit of shifting her head that I find charming. Her taffy-colored hair conceals her face. I want to see it, but then I am afraid I will be disappointed. What am I doing here on my knees, shaking with alcohol and the cold? I do not pray, but I hope that my children will know much happiness. I believe that there was a Christ, that he spoke the Beatitudes, cured the sick, and died on the Cross, and it seems marvellous to me that men should, for two thousand years, have repeated this story as a means of expressing their deepest feelings and intuitions about life. My only noticeable experience is a pleasant sense of humility. Kneeling at the chancel, I notice how expertly the wooden lamb holds in the crook of his leg the staff of Christ's banner. The acolytes have red dresses and muddy loafers. Leaving the chancel, I see the face of the blonde and I am disappointed. I take home a palm frond, not to cleanse my house of its ills but to demonstrate that I want my house to be blessed.

•

And the sad men, the lonely men, those who are unhappily married, drop

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So desirable. And yet, in one's effort to touch it, to acquire it for one's own, a dilemma unfolds.

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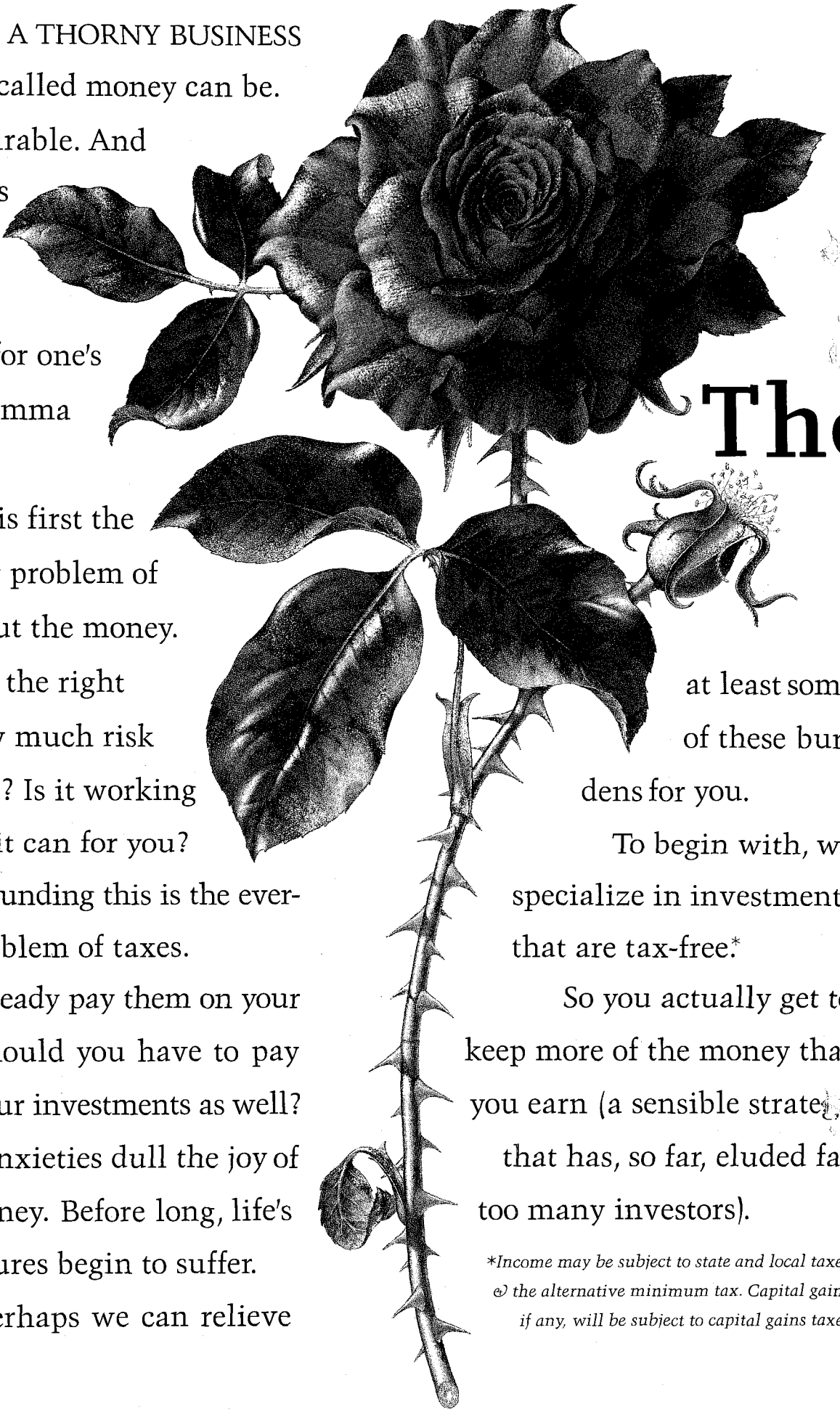

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at least some of these burdens for you.

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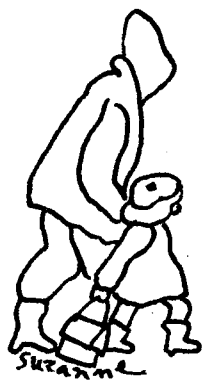
to their knees in garages, bathrooms, and motels asking God to help them understand the need for love. Unbelievers, every last one of them. Who is this God with whom they plead? He is an old man with a long white beard like a waterfall. Why do they, adult and intelligent men, behave so ridiculously? They seem forced to their knees by a palpable burden of pain.

•

Not drunk, not very drunk in any case, I decide that we should have our quarterly talk. "Things aren't going well," I say. "I don't know what you're talking about," says she. "Do you think this is the way a man and a woman should live together?" I say. "No," says she. "Well, let's talk." Her face is strained and pale, the eyes not protuberant but brilliant, the brows well up. "You destroy everything you love," says she. "I love my children," say I, "and I haven't destroyed them." "Let's leave the children out of this," says she. "I love my friends," say I. "You don't have any friends," says she. "You simply use people as a convenience." Then we go into the routine where she says she wishes I could see my face. This is followed by the fact that I deceive myself, that I am a creation of self-deception. She's said this before, and once offered to tell me some terrible truth about myself and then said it was too terrible. I don't know what she's aiming at here. Is this homosexuality? Has she determined that I am a homosexual? I have had my homosexual anxieties and experiences, but I find women much more attractive than men, and think it fitting and proper that I make my life with a woman. She then says that she knows herself absolutely, and that I know nothing of myself. This sort of judgment—which is how I think of it—bewilders me. How can any adult claim to know himself much better than another does? There seems to be some impermeability here. It seems to me unnatural. I don't understand it at all. I say that I am a loving person, and she asks how can I be a loving person, since I never see anyone? There is a digression here on the loneliness of the novelist, but I do see people and I do go out to them directly and warmly. I ask—it seems to me one of the few aggressive points I make—if she is afraid of being dependent. "I am," she says, "completely independent of you." I say that as a provider I've given her whatever she wanted. She says I haven't. She then says that I'm very funny about money with the children. I say that I've given the children whatever money they wanted, and that I've never reproached them. What does she mean by "funny"? She doesn't wish to discuss the matter. I say that I'm not much of a banker. She assents, laughing bitterly. There is much more, but I seem unable to recall it this morning. I mention the love I feel for my sons. "That's the only reason I'm sticking around," she says, getting to her feet. "Is that what you're doing?" I ask. "Sticking around?" "You take advantage of everything I say," she says. "I wouldn't have said that," say I, and covering my poor, poor cock with my hands I kiss her good night, take a Nembutal, and check out. Waking in the morning, I summon up my girls, but they do not come. It is she, who has indicted me as venomous, emotionally ignorant, a bad provider, self-deceived, whom I desire. I don't, I won't, admit that this is sexual masochism. There is too little evidence for this in the rest of my life. I sincerely doubt that this is a wishful repetition of my mother's dominance. I think maybe it's just bad luck.



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On the morning of my daughter's wedding, it is raining. I climb into Mary's bed, and she climbs out of it and climbs into mine. Later, naked, I urge her to sit, naked, in my lap, but she makes some exclamation of distaste and turns on the television. I find these rebuffs a serious depressant and, using this as an excuse, I take a little gin with my orange juice. Mary descends on my eggs, but she is quite welcome to them. On the street, a north wind is blowing the rain. On Fourteenth Street, two men, one of them with a peculiar head of yellow hair—it is dyed or perhaps a wig—slink out of a lunch counter. I think they are queer and that they are going to spend the day shoplifting. I buy an umbrella and some aspirin, and step into a dark, pleasant bar where I drink one and a half Martinis. Another faggot comes along the sidewalk. He wears moccasins, no socks, green velour trousers, and a sweater; but his means of locomotion is what interests me. He seems sucked along the street like an object in a wind tunnel, although there is no wind to speak of and no source of suction. Ben is at the hotel, and we dress and go off to Lüchow's. There is the desperate scene where I can't find Susie, and finally we reach the church. She seems frightened, and I am pleased to give her my arm and some support. This is a scene I have imagined countless times, and now it is being done, is done. I observe nothing of the reception beyond the fact that it is beautiful. "What a beautiful party it is!" I keep exclaiming. Where is the keen-eyed observer who could pick out the wrinkled skirt, the time-ravaged face, the drunken waiter? There is a sharp exchange with Mary. I have drunk so much that I cannot count on my memory, but I think—or claim to have suggested—that we must make some plans for ending the party. "You," says she, "are the spectre at the feast." The best thing to do is to assume I provoked this. Later, I drink whiskey in our maid's kitchen and speak broken Italian. I return at dark. It is raining. Ben is on the porch and I embrace him and repeat the remark about the spectre. "I'm on your side, Daddy," he says, "I'm on your side." I should not have done this. I don't really want him on my side.

•

I have a drink at quarter after eleven. Go to the B.s' at noon. I sleep and wake and drink and sleep again and wake and drink. I suggest that we discuss a separation or a divorce. We will sell the house, divide the price, etc. She can go and live with her beloved sister in New Jersey. This is all preposterous and drunken, and, hearing the songbirds in the morning, I realize that I don't have the guts, spine, vitality, whatever, to sell my house and start wandering. I don't know what to do. I must sleep with someone, and I am so hungry for love that I count on touching my younger son at breakfast as a kind of link, a means of staying alive.

•

But Monday morning. Overcast. 9:30. I will go to the dentist in half an

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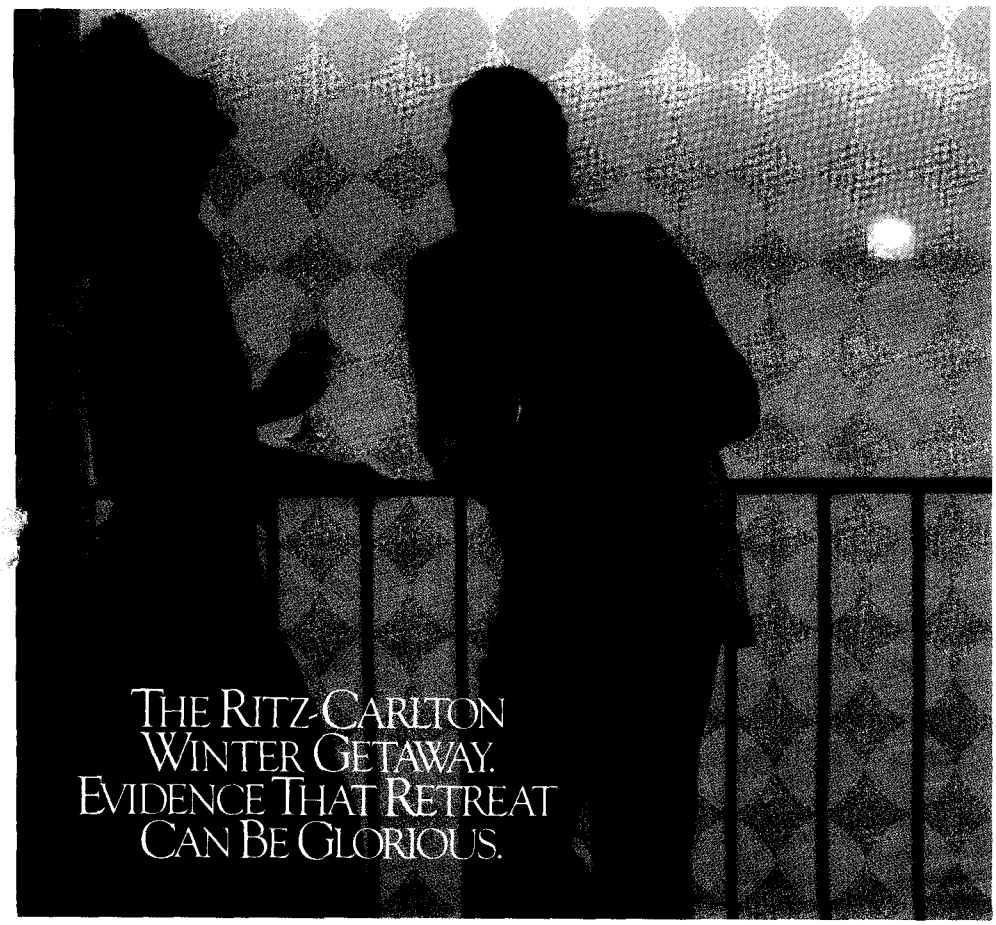
hour, and I would like a drink. I write, at breakfast, the biography of a man whose dependence on alcohol was extreme but who, through some constitutional fortitude, was able to ration his drinks, to exploit alcohol rather than have it exploit him. He never drank before noon and, after his lunch drinks, not again until five. It was a struggle, it always would be, and by the time he was fifty he realized that there would be no suspension of the fight. He would never be able to pass the whiskey bottle in the pantry without sweating. On Saturdays and Sundays he would paint screens, split wood, cut the broad lawns of Evenmere, looking at his watch every ten minutes to see if the time hadn't come for a legitimate scoop. At five minutes to five, his hands trembling and his brow soaked with sweat, he would get out the ice, pour the beautiful, golden whiskey into a glass, and begin the better part of his life.

•

Now Thursday morning. Twenty minutes to eleven. I am in the throes of a gruelling booze fight. I think a tranquillizer will retard my circulation. I could cut grass, but I am afraid of pulling my ankle. There is really nothing to do but sit here and sweat it out. I can write myself a letter. Dear Myself, I am having a terrible time with the booze. Ride it out.

•

I think of my brother's ruin—that boy of summer. Whatever happened? Quarterback. Drinking Coca-Cola in the field house. Captain of the undefeated hockey team. Happy with his friends, nimble with his girls, he loved his muzzy and dazzy. Oh, whatever happened? Married in the church of Christ, randy in bed, quick at business, a loving father, lucky at cards and dice—what happened? Did he find his wife in someone else's bed? As the order vanished from his own affairs, he sought to order the world. "This is the way you do it." "Listen to me." He pissed in the umbrella stand, drop-kicked the roast beef, waved his prick at Mrs. Vanderveer, and called in the morning to ask if everyone was all right. He spent that year in New York. Went around with an art director who lisped. Lumbered after the Madison Avenue whores. "I never drink before lunch," he said, and maybe he didn't, but he certainly used it after the twelve-o'clock whistle blew. Six Beefeaters and a beer, and then it was time for the afternoon drinking to begin. He broke his ankle in a soccer game, locked himself up in the bedroom, and drank ten quarts of Gilbey's. Oh, whatever happened? He had his first attack of claustrophobia at LaGuardia Airport. He thought he would suffocate, and he always carried a flask after that. He was such a charmer. He was charming at his clubs, charming at his parties, and when he broke down he was charming at Alcoholics Anonymous. And he was terribly misunderstood. In this respect he was practically a nut. Nobody knew the score, and when he told them they wouldn't listen. But where did the self-righteousness come from, the pained and beatific smile, the pose of moral superiority? "If I know one thing, I know that my children love me." You can draw a line easily enough from the summery boy to the club drunk, but where did the priggishness, the homely maxims, the phony hopefulness come from? "I've always done the best I



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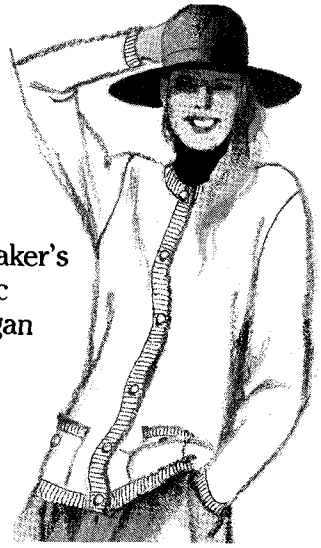

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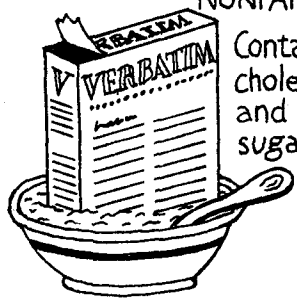

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knew how to do. No one can say that I didn't." How could he have come so far from the frisky quarterback, the locker-room horseplay?

•

My ancient Uncle Hamlet, that black-mouthed old monkey, used to say that he had enjoyed the best fifty years in the history of his country and that I could have the rest. Wars, depressions, automobile accidents, droughts, black-outs, municipal corruption, polluted rivers. He let me have it all on a platter.

•

Off we go to Ben's commencement. So spread out in folding chairs on a grassy quadrangle on a summer's day —this seems to be a rearguard action of the genteel. A few women cry as the graduating class marches in. The boys are a mixed bag—long hair, short hair, handsome, homely—but the force of good and evil in a hundred lives is felt. When they are seventeen and eighteen, their faces still have the purity of caricature. The vast noses, the wide-set eyes, the big mouths, all these things that time will regulate and diminish are intact. Rising to our feet, we sing loudly, "We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing." Here are the same faces one sees on the Nantucket boat. The tranquillity of the ceremony arises from the fact that we are a community of values. We went to the same schools and colleges and parties, we summer on the sea islands, there is an unusual sameness to our clothing, our incomes, our diets, and our beliefs. Winthrop Rockefeller gives the address. "Would that the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle were in our midst today. Would that Einstein could be with us. You have been given the tools of education. How you apply them is your responsibility in this world of bewildering and accelerated change. By the year two thousand, we will have perfected our technological society, but what about the soul of man?" The prizegiving is interminable, and I go out to the car and have a drink.

•

Hammer puts a dime in the lock of the men's toilet, and enters it, but not for the usual purpose. He gets to his knees in the privacy of the toilet, bows his head, and says, "Almighty God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men . . . " When he has finished his prayer he stands, dusts off his trousers, and takes a flask from his pocket. He fills the cap with whiskey, making appreciative groans.

•

Rain in the night, and as it falls straight into the valley it seems to be an undoing, an unloosening sound. I feel as if I were unravelling a snarled fishing line. Happily.

•

The *cafard* followed Hammer, but followed him without much guile, either because it was lazy or perhaps because it was an assassin so confident of its victim that it had no need to exert itself. On Friday, Hammer flew to Rome and checked in at the Eden. On Saturday morning, he woke feeling cheerful and randy. He was just as cheerful on Sunday, but on Monday he woke in a melancholy so profound that he had to drag himself out of bed and struggle, step by step, to the shower. On Tuesday he caught the train to Fondi and took a cab through the mountains to Sperlonga, where he stayed with his friends, the G.s. He had two good days there, but the bête noire caught up with him on the third, and he took a train for Naples at Formia. He had four good days in Naples. Had the bête noire lost track of its victim or was it simply moving in the leisurely way of a practiced murderer? His fifth day in Naples was crushing, and he took the afternoon train to Rome. Here he had three good days, but he woke on the fourth in danger of his life and made arrangements to take the noon plane to New York. So, by moving from place to place, he could count on two days or sometimes three each week in which he felt himself to be a natural man. The *cafard* always followed. It was never waiting for him at his destination.

•

I dream: Enabling legislation was passed by Congress yesterday making it a statutory offense to have wicked thoughts about President Johnson. Suspects will be questioned by the F.B.I. with the aid of a lie detector.

•

I find on the floor of Ben's room an unmailed letter to L. He may have

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meant me to read it, and I put this down with the hope that I won't mention it to Ben. He is alone, he says. He is crying. He is alone with Mum and Dad, the two most self-centered animals in the creation. Dad wanted him to drive west in an old car, but he's bought a new car that he likes and that has a long guarantee. Dad thinks he's so great to have given me a car, but the only reason I got it is because I know how to handle him. He gave me a long speech on responsibility, but he was so drunk he couldn't remember it in the morning. I told him where he could put his car.

•

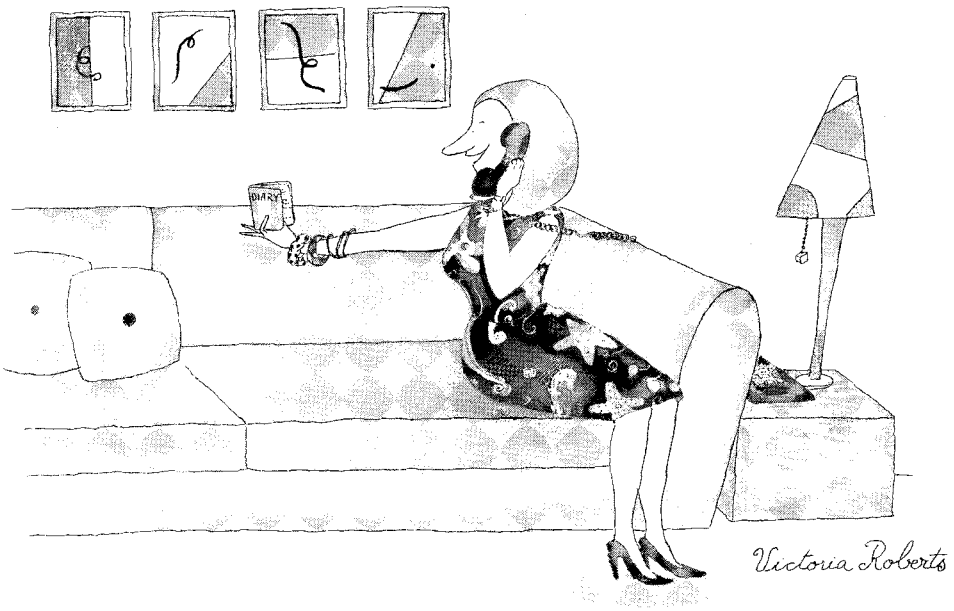
Nailles might write a reply to Tony: I found your letter addressed to God in the middle of your floor after you'd left. You must have wanted me to read it. I've never read a letter of yours before. I don't understand why you feel the way you do. I don't think I've ever gloated over what I've been able to give you. If you feel guilty about being on the receiving end of things you might, to lessen your guilt, imagine that I gloat. It's the only explanation I can hit on. My own father was able to give me almost nothing: no affection, love, clothing, or food. He was penniless, friendless, old, and wretched. It is important to me, of course, that I have been able to give you what I lacked. When I see you drive off in a bucket-seat racing car, with matched luggage packed with new clothing, I am very content, but I did not give these things to you. There is not enough self-consciousness in my support of you to let me use a word like "give," or "share," or "contribute." You are welcome to such money as I have, exactly as you are welcome to such love as I have, and that seems boundless. You wrote, in capitals, that the only reason you were able to get anything out of me is because you know how to handle me. This puts my serene love in terms of flattery on your part, stupidity on mine. In what way have you handled me? You answer me. When I've wished you good morning after we've stayed up late a few nights talking about sex while I had my nightcap, I've always made it clear that you were under no obligation to keep me company.

I do not understand why you should say that your mother and I are the people in the world you most hate, unless you feel so deeply guilty about your behavior that you are unable to blame yourself and must blame us. You say that we are the most self-centered people in the world when, in fact, our love for you verges on fatuity. Aside from erotic reveries, you are the first thing on my mind when I wake, and when I sleep I sometimes dream, lovingly, of you. I remember watching you, like a swain, while you fired Roman candles into the brook; watching you ski in the orchard; watching you ski at Stowe. Climbing a mountain with you and your cousin, I had a painful wrench at my heart and thought that it didn't matter, because I was with my son. Night after night in Saratoga, unable to sleep, I imagined that we climbed together over the Dolomites. It is possible, I suppose, that in order to become a man one has to mutilate the carapace of one's father's affections. I pray that this is not so. You mention someone's bullying you, and I wonder if there is some unself-conscious connection between the terrors of your adolescence and your feeling for me. . . .

But if Nailles wrote such a letter he would destroy it.

•

I would not want this to degenerate into the journal of an invalid, but pain, discomfort, and anxiety have dominated these weeks, and I have a feeling that the medicine makes me dopey. I drink at eleven to still an unruly gut, and read about Ben Franklin in Paris in the 1780s. The day is unseasonably warm. Hornets and yellow jackets fall into our soup and our cocktails. Wasps swarm on the upstairs porch. A stupid possum comes up the front steps. I think he is wounded or rabid. He is in no hurry. A small snake, marked with deep red, black, and white, lies on the stairs to the garden. Geese, snakes, wasps, the flowers in the garden all seem apprehensive about the inalienable power of the coming winter. A. comes, and I lose four straight games of backgammon and am bored. I think this is the medicine. It is so warm and fair that we have dinner out-of-doors. Sitting on the terrace, I see an orb of light appear in the atmosphere, as large and brilliant as a full moon, only orange and green. It throws a double reflection on the haze. I rush into the kitchen and urge Mary to come out and see this mystery, but she is washing a teapot and it is difficult to get a woman away from the dishpan, even to see the millennium. When she comes out, the orb has faded, but there is still some luminous vapor in the air. T. asks me for a drink. After much talk he says that he has lost his job. 35 years old, with three children. He seems cheerful, and confesses to having stolen the Help Wanted section from my Sunday *Times*. He goes on to talk about his father. That man, he says, has an unclean spirit. He bought his sons train tickets to their colleges and did nothing else. They worked as grocery clerks, hospital orderlies, waiters, etc. That



"I have dusk free."

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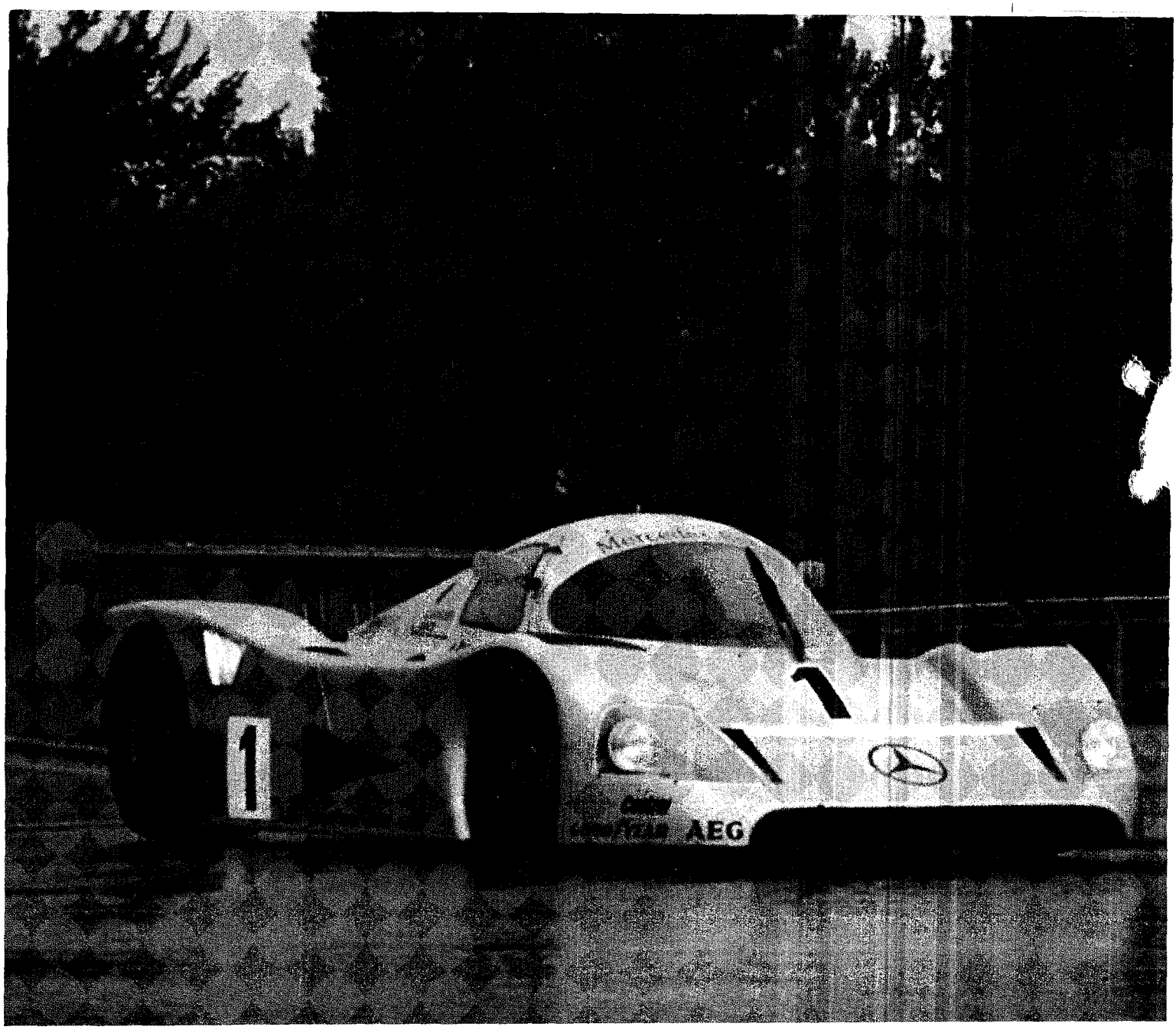

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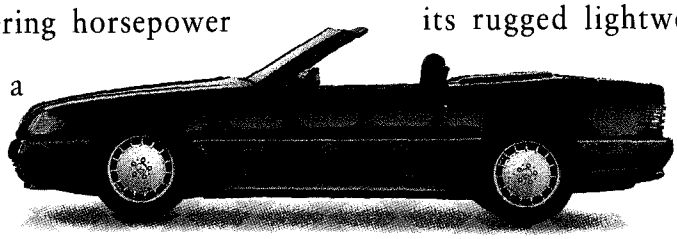

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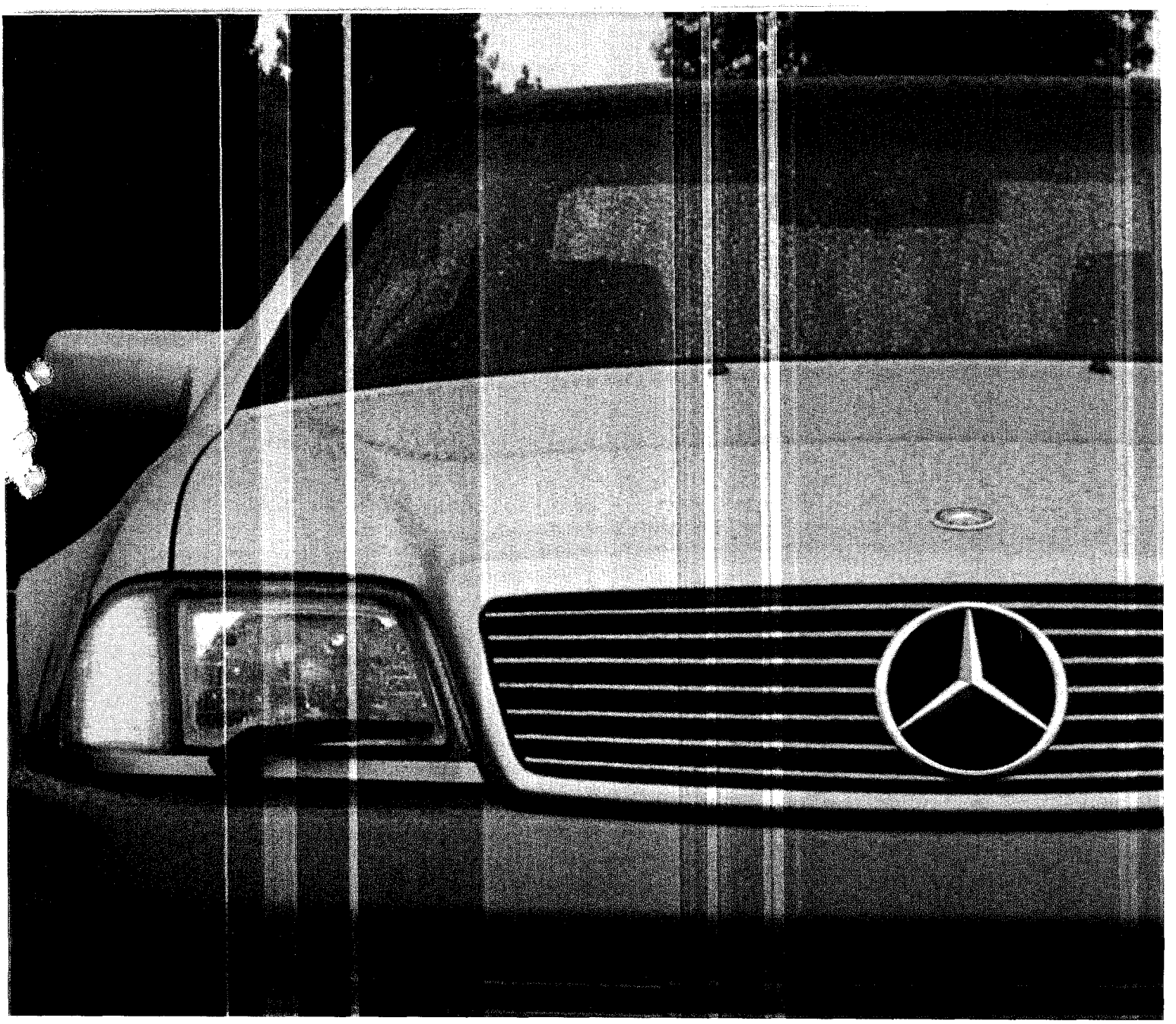

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man, he repeats, has an unclean spirit. I am superstitious about condemning one's male parent. Leaving them, I have a nightcap and think of how little my father did for me. He did not even give me bus fare; but he didn't have it, and I think his spirit was pure.

•

For the last time (I pray) this is the journal of an invalid. Feeling poorly as well as frightened, I go to bed after lunch. I see the golden leaves outside the window, see a shaft of light reflected on the glass, and sleep until five, when I dress and go down for a drink and some supper. Back to bed at eight: I am very happy in my bulwark, my sanctuary, my firm, clean, warm bed, and I think that my infection was probably brought on by the gruelling burden of nervous tension. How unwarranted and mysterious it has seemed. Vertigo on the station platform. Will the blacktop fly up and strike me between the eyes? I never know; but it never has. Vertigo in Grand Central. Walking in the city with my son, I stay close to my club so that in case I collapse there will be some place where I can be taken. Scrotum-grabbing vertigo on bridges, tunnels, and freeways. So I think that some organ was bound to give—and one did—and that the cure is rest. Rest was all I needed, and I needed an uncommon amount of rest because the burdens were uncommon. Waking from time to time, I think that I am no longer sick, that I have been granted some great bounty. I am stirred by an immense gratitude, but at whom can I aim my thanks? The divine intelligence cannot go from bed to bed like Santa Claus. So I am grateful, humble, convinced that the worst is over.

•

My only brother, after twenty-five years of hard drinking, including three critical alcoholic crises; after having lost his job and all his worldly goods, his wife, and the trust and affection of at least two of his children; after having found everyone who employed him stupid and unresponsive, and after having drifted around furnished rooms on the South Shore, selling advertising time for a small radio station; after having been seriously crippled with arthritis, and after having reached the age of sixty-two, calls at nine while I lie sick in bed. The voice is exclamatory and cheerful. He asks after me solicitously, as he used to when he had been drunk for a week. I am pleased to think that we share a durable constitution. I remember how mysteriously our relationship took on the nature of a contest. He is driving to Colorado on Saturday, while I, so temperate, industrious, etc., can scarcely drive to the next village.

•

Sunday morning, jumpy and megrimish. The President, on the deck of an aircraft carrier, says, "Your weapons and your wings are the swords and the shields of our freedom. The names of your planes—Phantom, Intruder, Hawkeye, Vigilante, Skyhawk—they are the watchwords of our liberty." We will fight for freedom of speech wherever it is threatened, even if we have to sacrifice our own freedom of speech. Day after day the makeup man at the *Times* runs the photographs of dead or wounded soldiers cheek by jowl with the Tiffany advertisements. The war is not going to be won at cocktail parties. Republicans and Southern Democrats have hamstrung the anti-poverty program. Men and women of Jewish descent are blackballed at the country club. Next to armaments, the nation's largest-selling product is whiskey and drugs. Wall Street capitalists are real, militaristic, and avaricious. You can see them on the station platform any morning, the overt and cheerful sponsors of tyranny all over the world. They raise the bonds for Salazar, Franco, Papa Doc.

One knows all of this, and the corruption of the war is inestimable—the dead soldier and the Tiffany bracelet. This is madness. And yet I don't want "Bullet Park" to be an indictment. The admissions committee at the club does not scandalize me. Neither does the fact that D. has sold a bond issue for Franco. But without an indictment I seem to have no moral position—no position, in fact, at all. Hammer was not such a fool as to assume that Bullet Park, because it is affluent, is sinful. I would not be such a fool as to assume that, because Hammer is comfortable, happily married, and has few discernible moral mandates beyond the mandates of mannerliness, he is a villain. What I wanted was an uncomplicated story about a man who loved his son.

•

There is still snow on the trees; it is that kind of snow. One sees it out of the windows here like some extraordinary garden. It is the kind of snowfall about which girls write verse. "How like a fairyland it seems/a veritable land of dreams/The garbage pail with ermine cap/and all the lawns a pearly nap." There is an uncommon silence when I walk Federico to the school bus. The light is eclipsed and lovely. One wants to see it all so clearly.

•

The second of February, the valley darkened by fog; but I wake with no *cafard*, no hangover, no aches, no pains, no shakes, no megrims, no racking thirst, no hunger for pills, no strange sensation in my cock, no anxieties, no crushing and nameless sorrows, no tremors; a healthy, well-preserved man in his fifties, at peace with the world.

•

Having nothing better to do—which is a mistaken position to have got into—I read two old journals. High spirits and weather reports recede into the background, and what emerges are two astonishing contests, one with alcohol and one with my wife. With alcohol, I record my failures, but the number of mornings (over the last ten years) when I've sneaked drinks in the pantry is appalling. As for the marriage, a number of things appear. The most useful one is a view of marriage that is neither larky nor desperate; a sense of how large a continent this is, and how complex are its burdens. Sentiment and intelligence seem more important than passion. There are many accounts of sexual and romantic ecstasy, but they are outnumbered by an incredible number of rebuffs. It literally pains me to contemplate this. I urge myself a hundred times to be cheerful and keep my pecker up, and how puerile this advice seems. Another alarming fact is the number of people, from my point of view, who appear to feel that I am in the right. Do I appear to the world to

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be henpecked? I think not. I think this is a part of the vastness of this continent. I think my mistake is to consider marriage vows as something on a valentine, and marriage itself as a simple romance. (Try it for Hammer, painful as it may seem.) And another disconcerting thing about the old journals is the recurrent mention of homosexuality. But why do I blame myself for this? Homosexuality seems to be a commonplace in our time—no less alarming than drunkenness and adultery—but my anxiety on the matter is very deep and seems incurable. I suffer, from time to time, a painful need for male tenderness, but I cannot perform with a man without wrecking my self-esteem. What, then, is my self-esteem? It seems composed of imponderables—shifty things. It is, at its worst, I suppose, a deep wish to placate Muzzy and Dazzy. It is, at its best, a sense of fitness that approaches ecstasy—the sense of life as a privilege, the earth as something splendid to walk on. Relax, relax.

•

I brood on the lack of universality in our sexual appetites. A loves his wife and no one but her. B loves young men, and when these are scarce he makes out with men who impersonate youth. C likes all comely women between the ages of twelve and fifty, including all races. D likes himself, and jacks off frequently. He also likes men who resemble him sufficiently to make the orgasm narcissistic. E likes both men and women, depending on his moods, and I don't know whether he is the most tragic or the most natural of the group. None of them share, at any discernible level, the desires of the others. They share customs, diets, habits of dress, laws, and governments, but naked and randy they seem to be men from different planets.

•

Easter Sunday. The temperature at 72. No one can remember such a fine day in this part of the world. "I've never seen such a beautiful Easter," we say to one another. "Have you?" Last year it snowed. Flowers in the garden, and the birds in the trees seem to be singing an invitation list: Peabody-Peabody, Tickner-Tickner, Trilling, Ewing, and Swope. A law firm? It is a serene day for me. The empty tomb. Life everlasting. I lie in the morning sun thinking about the mysteriousness of obscenity. All those cocks and balls drawn on toilet walls are not the product of perverse frustrations. Some of them are high-hearted signs of good cheer. We go to the egg hunt, mostly out of respect for P., and the party is ostensibly one of those informal gatherings in which the social rituals seem heightened by the absence of neckties. I remain happy and serene, thinking in the middle of the night of the love I feel for my sons.

•

At the edge of the swimming pool—twilight, of course—D. and I sit barearse, smoking, undisturbed by each other's nakedness. "I never had an electric train," he says. "My father never took me to a ballgame, never once. He took me to the circus a couple of times, but he never once took me to a ballgame."

•

Updike's cover story—and I quite sensibly envy his gifts. I defend myself by saying that he has developed an impractical degree of sensibility, and that my own stubborn and sometimes idle prose has more usefulness. One does not ask, skating on a pond, how the dark sky carries its burden of starlight. I don't, in any case.

•

I read the Solzhenitsyn with pleasure and think that I will read until dawn as I did with Tolstoy forty years ago. Fortunately, I have enough common sense to go to bed. It is forty years later. The book is not only an exhaustive indictment of Stalin's tyranny, his hired torturers and murderers, it also seems to be an indictment of the backwardness of the Russian people. This is, I think, because Russian literature, in spite of the fifty-year struggle for change, shows less organic growth and change than any other literature. We do not find characters out of Sterne and Trollope wandering into contemporary English literature, but in this book the cruel and stupid bureaucrats are the same men we met in Pushkin and Gogol. That woman writing with her finger on a steamy window first appeared in Lermontov. It is an intensely national literature, you might say a provincial literature, so that descriptions of drunkenness and stupidity go beyond the individual character into the national character, the Russian

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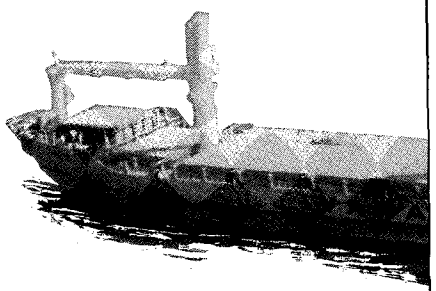

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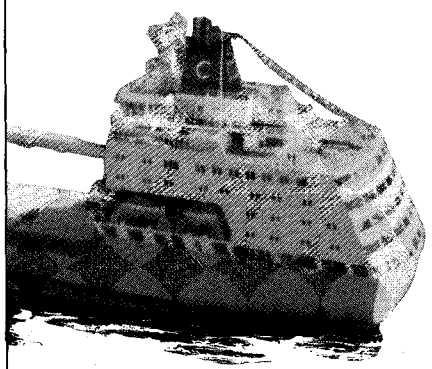

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people, and the race. Some European sophistication seems to have rubbed off onto the aristocracy, but today's Russians seem not only backward, they seem determinedly so. On the plane from Copenhagen was a Russian family—beautifully dressed in English clothes—all of them quite plump. What worlds and worlds separate them from the babushkas at the hotel, whose surliness is predicated on the fact that this is a classless society? The French and German invasions don't seem to have affected this backwardness. The linen is stained, it takes an hour or longer to get a simple meal, the rooms are ugly, and in some places, like Yalta, there is no escape from the loudspeakers that broadcast deafening and vulgar music. Solzhenitsyn's prisoners are mostly serious, spiritual, and decent men, but they are prisoners. In Russia one comes upon impetuousness, candor, and vision, but one also comes upon suspiciousness, a sort of cultivated stupidity, and that hopeless obtuseness that Gogol railed against.

•

A new journal, and I have only to observe that I seem impelled to write nothing, not even letters. I can't remember what I did when I finished the last novel. I went alone to Rome late in the winter. As I came to the end of "Bullet Park" I felt the need to overhaul my approach to things; that is, to avoid constructing fiction out of the minutiae of upper-middle-class life: She was the kind of woman who gave all automobiles and many other appliances the feminine gender. The Volkswagen, refrigerator, and washing machine were all "she," and when they broke down they were described as sick. "She is sick," she would say of the refrigerator. She spoke freely to traffic lights and described the car as being thirsty. . . . I would like to stop this sort of thing.

•

In trying to clarify my past, it would be much easier if I could look back with pure bitterness and scorn. If I could damn the sexual ignorance and suspiciousness of my parents, damn the ghastly wreckage of their marriage, damn the house, the neighborhood, and the schools I attended, it would be clear and easy, but their affairs were a mixture of excellence and stupid cruelty. The fact that I was often very happy seems in retrospect to be a massive limitation.

•

Federico carves his pumpkin, and we get it onto the porch and lighted before night falls; but either I am morbidly sensitive or drunk, or Mary is *maldisposta*—things are not cheerful. She seized the galleys and read them straight through. "Of course I cannot judge the book," she says, "because I know in every case the facts on which it is based. Hammer is revolting. . . ." Since there is some correspondence between Hammer and me, I am offended or wounded. "Isn't it better than the 'Scandal'?" I ask, but she doesn't reply. Praise, however foolish, is very important to me now. I invent praise.

•

At eight o'clock, on All Hallows' Eve, in the middle of a TV show of incredible vulgarity, the President of the U.S. announces that we will stop bombing in Southeast Asia. He is tired. The face seems wasted, one might say corrupt. He uses the first person pronoun more often than I think is necessary and seems, through a massive egotism, to have damaged his ability to communicate. There is no jubilation to this announcement, but this may be because I am drunk. I am skeptical, and the possibility of expediency or cynicism is inescapable.

•

Election Day, and I have the brains not to stay up for the returns. Mary's friend arrives quite late, and I do not see her; and why should I take such an uneasy dislike to someone I have not seen? Unable to sleep, I make out with Mia Farrow in Leningrad and wander around Rome again. I have, in my memories, walked around Rome so often that these days I find myself in the slums that ring the old city. Past the Borghese Gardens I run into slums; I see the slums on the Aventine, the slums past Santa Maria. Santa Maria, I say, was constructed to commemorate a miraculous fall of snow. There are some splendid early mosaics, but they are so poorly lighted as to be invisible. Coming into Rome on the train during a thunderstorm on some late afternoon, I saw a naked man in a shed, washing himself from a bucket. He was washing himself very carefully. Why should this figure seem so enviable? He might be going to work in a dirty trattoria and suffer the abuse of a distempered cook. Driving toward the sea from Siena I saw a young man pulling off his bathing trunks at the edge of a stream. On the steps of a boat club in Venice I saw a man taping an oar. Why do I long for these circumstances? It seems that in my coming of age I missed a year—perhaps a day or an hour—so that the consecutiveness of growth was damaged. But how can I go back and find this moment that was lost?

•

I have been on the spiritual, alcoholic, and emotional ropes for six weeks, and I don't know how to get off them. To ration my drinks is one way, but this sometimes amounts to nothing but a struggle. I could go to a shrink, I suppose. I could get more exercise. There is a path through the woods that I can take this rainy morning; but instead I will take the path to the pantry and mix a Martini. Look, look, then, here is a weak man, a man without character. Dishonesty is what one means, purposeless dishonesty. It is the most despicable trait. You take a nap and claim to be tired from work. You hide a whiskey bottle in the closet and claim to be a wiser man than your friends who hide whiskey bottles in the closet. You promise to take a child to the circus and have such a bad hangover that you can't move. You promise to send money to your old mother and do not.

•

The legitimacy of otherness. The dentist. The eyes are, for a man, soft; the mouth pretty; the face a little coarse now with age and fatigue but must, when he was younger, have been appealing. On his hideously elaborate office wall is a photograph of the warship on which he was dentist; also a photograph of him in a scant basketball uniform—a comely youth. I think my suspiciousness is perhaps more prominent than his oddness, and yet there is

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some otherness here, and if we became friends our friendship would be based not on a shared enthusiasm for professional football but on a shared memory of aloneness, improbable dreams or ambitions, disappointments.

•

Dressy, scented, strung with pearls, and quite alone, they order beef Wellington and leave it half eaten. It troubles me that their dilemma should seem so apparent. The jocular businessmen at the bar—laughing and drinking—offend me deeply because (I think) so little of their nature is hidden. This is the square world and I detest it. Walking on the streets, I am not pleased by the crowds. Looking for a pretty girl, I find none; and even if I found one she would not be my salvation. Because of this, perhaps—this invertedness—the dark hotel room, and my own nature I have, at dusk, a powerful yen for Ganymede. I love him. I want to talk with him, embrace him, debauch him. I call him, and the sound of his voice pleases me. I wonder if this could have something to do with my early life with my brother. He says that he may call me later. Oh, what bliss it will be! But when I come in at eleven the yen has vanished, and if the phone rang I think I would not answer it. It is not the ardor of my desire that astonishes me but the mysterious ease with which it comes and goes. So this is my nature; this and gin.

•

We leave for the tropics in a light fall of snow. The traffic on Long Island is hellish, and if the plane had not been delayed we would have missed it. I say that the planes we travel in these days are a little like the buses that used to take the unemployed from city to city in the thirties. The air is bad, some of the seats are broken, there is a general atmosphere of disrepair, nomadism; and this is hyperbole. The fuselage looks like a tenement roof. We come out of the snowstorm into a hot night in Puerto Rico. The mixture of black and white seems to generate some sexual force. The powerful eroticism of travel—one travels with a hard-on. There are some prostitutes in the waiting room, including a youth in yellow trousers, his hands draped limply over his prick. He's not bad-looking. How did a boy like you get into a spot like this? Don't you want to marry, have children, breed dogs? Where would one take him, and what sort of performance would ensue? My curiosity proves my innocence. We fly farther south, and at two in the morning, in the harsh light of the airport, we seem singled out more by some force of judgment than by the wish to travel and see the world. We seem penitents. There is a country-club couple, bound, I guess, for the Hilton. His face is boyish and ravaged. She shakes her yellow mane girlishly. It is nearly three in the morning when we reach the inn.

•

I remember none of it clearly this morning. I cannot seem to summon or recall the sea and the beach. The Caribbean is the color of the Caribbean, and the sound of the waves is much less vehement, much less resonant than the sound of the Atlantic. One walks on the coral strand. Clink clink. The coral under one's sneakers clinks like hotel china and small change. Golgotha. Clink clink. Fibula, tibia, brain, kid-

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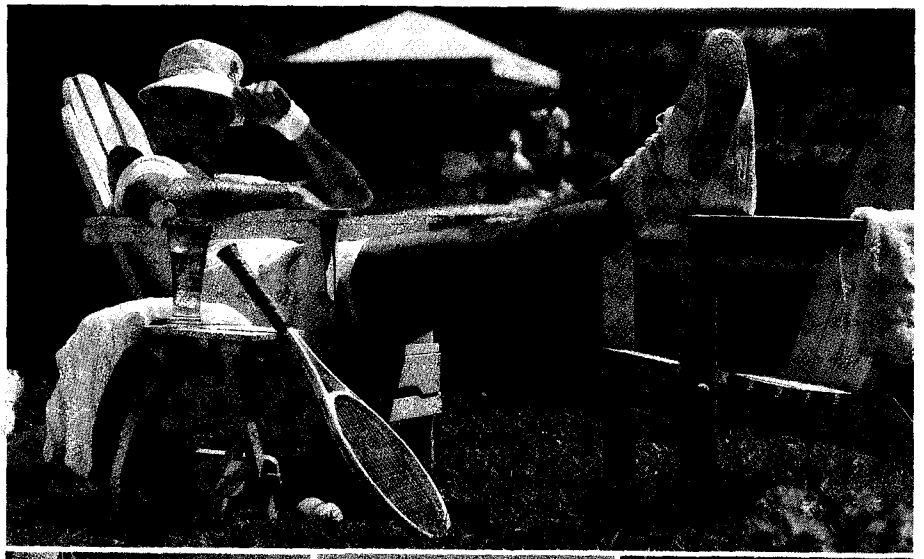

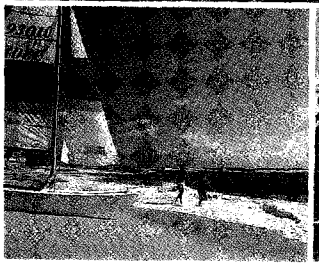

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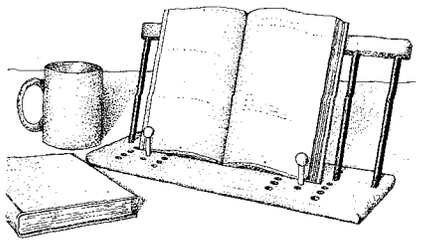

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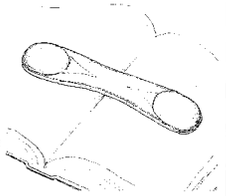

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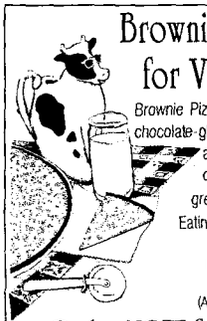

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ney, and the bones of a thousand fingers. I do not snorkle, because (I claim) I am unable to hold a tube in my mouth, and while this is partly true, it is also true that I suffer from both claustrophobia and vertigo. I read Graham Greene and sneak up from the beach at eleven for a scoop of gin. They travel to the tropics and read Rex Stout. They travel to the tropics to get a tan. The husband oils the wife. The wife oils the husband. They stretch out in the sun. Ten minutes on one side. Ten minutes on the other. They lie with their feet in the air to get some color under the chin. One man has achieved an exceptional shade of gold. His body—or what I see of it—is hairless, and comely. His chest is unmuscular, and when he rounds his shoulders he has small and fetching breasts, like the statues of Apollo. The face is not much—darkened, I think, by vanity. Returning to the beach at dusk, I find him with a towel looped around his neck like a skater's scarf. Aha! Narcissus. Watching the sunset, I drop my trunks and get my cock between her legs. We make out. We make out at sunset, make out after lunch, make out before going to sleep. Once while I score she holds a glass of ice water in her hand and does not spill a drop. This is not a source of bitterness. This is to observe the invincibility of a hard-on.

•

Dear Lord—who else?—keep me away from the bottles in the pantry. Guide me past the gin and the bourbon. Nine in the morning. I suppose I will succumb at ten; I hope to hold off until eleven.

•

I revert to the expedient of reading my own work as a sort of tranquillizer. It doesn't really hold my attention, but it does pass the time. The pills do not seem strong enough, and I drink at eleven. However, I take only one nip after dinner and sleep well. I dream a movie in full color. It begins on a deceptively decorous note and then moves gradually into a bloody Bedouin war. The audience is rapt until the Bedouins leave the screen and behead all those in the front row. "Why, it's real!" the survivors scream as they run into the street. It was produced in Mexico City and was directed by a young woman named Juliet Morro, with whom I have coffee at a café. It is playing in New York at the Left Bank Cinema, on lower Fifth Avenue. There have been 742 performances.

•

I must convince myself that writing is not, for a man of my disposition, a self-destructive vocation. I hope and think it is not, but I am not genuinely sure. It has given me money and renown, but I suspect that it may have something to do with my drinking habits. The excitement of alcohol and the excitement of fantasy are very similar.

•

For the next year, he did almost nothing but answer his mail and enjoy a life of idleness in his pleasant country house in the hills above the Hudson River. The only writing he did was to make an account of his drinking. "First scoop at half past nine," he would write. "Held off this morning until eleven-twenty-two." Sometimes the accounts were more extensive. "Sat this morning in the parlor at half past nine," he wrote, "reading the Sunday *Times*." Riots in California. Nudity on the stage. Wanting a drink but determined not to mix one until Mary had left the kitchen. I had decided on a gin-and-tonic. Her comings and goings took more of my attention than the news in the paper did. Had she made the beds? I went upstairs to see. She had. There were clothes in the washing machine. When the machine had finished its cycle she would probably hang the clothes on the line, giving me a chance to mix my drink. Now she was arranging flowers in two vases. The vases belonged in the library, and when the flowers were finished she might take the vases upstairs, giving me a chance to slip into the pantry. However, when the flowers were finished she left the vases on a table and began to crack hard-boiled eggs. What was she doing this for? We were going to the W.s' for lunch and had no use for hard-boiled eggs. She went on shelling eggs while my thirst got more intense. By the time the eggs were shelled, the washing machine had stopped. She took the clothes out of the machine, and put them in a hamper. I was ready to streak into the pantry, but she didn't hang the clothes on the line. She then stepped into the parlor—on her way upstairs, I hoped—but she then noticed a smear on one of the windowpanes,

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returned to the kitchen for a rag and some window-washing stuff, and polished the dirty light. She then returned to the kitchen and, to my absolute horror, unfolded the ironing board. She seldom, if ever, irons, and this maneuver seemed to me unfair. I supposed she was going to iron the wrinkles out of the dress she would wear to lunch. This oughtn't to take more than five minutes, but five minutes was more than I could wait, and in full view of my wife, and the world, I went into the pantry and mixed a drink. It was eighteen minutes to eleven.

•

On the screen four naked men appeared to be doing something to one another, although the scene was so badly lit that you couldn't be sure. Then the light increased, and there was no doubt about what was going on. A stranger seated on my right put his hand—accidentally, it seemed—on my knee, and I got up gracefully and moved to another part of the theatre. I wanted to avoid encouragement and scorn. On the screen the four naked men had paired off, and the scene appeared to be shot through the opening of a man's trousers. I thought then, but without nostalgia, of the movie theatres of my youth. In the small town where I grew up there was only one. It was called the Alhambra. It was not palatial, but there was a golden proscenium arch, and some plaster wreaths on the ceiling. My favorite movie was called "The Fourth Alarm." I saw it first one Tuesday after school and stayed on for the evening show. My parents were alarmed when I didn't come home for supper. On Wednesday I played hooky, went to the one-o'clock show, and was able to see the picture twice and get home in time for supper. I went to school on Thursday, but I went to the theatre as soon as school closed, and sat partway through the evening show. My parents must have called the police, because a patrolman came into the theatre and made me go home. I was scolded and I believe I cried. I was forbidden to go to the theatre on Friday, but I spent all day Saturday there, and on Saturday the picture ended its run. The picture was about the substitution of automobiles for horse-drawn fire engines. In some fictitious city there were four fire companies. Three of the teams had been replaced by engines, and the miserable horses had been sold to brutes. One team remained, but its days were numbered, and the men and the horses were very sad. Then suddenly there was a great fire in the city. One saw the first engine, the second, and the third race off to the conflagration. Back at the horse-drawn company things were even sadder. The men sat around the firehouse in an atmosphere of dejection. Then the fourth alarm rang—it was their summons—and they sprang into action, harnessed the team, and galloped across the city. They put out the fire, saved the city, and were given an amnesty by the mayor. I would open my Lifesavers and wait for it to start all over again. It seemed that I couldn't get enough; but I could get enough of what was going on among the naked men, and I got up and left.

•

Yesterday my older son was married. I rang the church bell.

•

Veterans Day. The paper reports an unusual number of patriotic demonstrations, but the *Times* is noncommittal. I wish I could understand those men and women who feel Communism to be an acute threat to their way of life, their spirit. People who favor the war in Asia drive with their headlights on. Between here and Harmon half the cars have their lights burning. I find something menacing in this mute and anonymous means of communication. One takes a stand—makes a threat—but the face is never seen, and nothing, of course, is said. So we pass one another's dark lights and lights that burn—taking sides in a bloody war.

•

Into town on the 4:40. Night falls on the river. At Grand Central, crowds of commuters wait at the gates. They do not seem undone by death. They seem to be a reasonable, clean, and useful population, a little urgent and a little tired, but I think it would be a fatuous mistake to compare them to the population of Limbo. I walk the streets. Anxiety and perhaps the New York *Times* have built up in my mind a feeling that the city is sinister and dangerous, but tonight the couples that I see on their way to a restaurant or the theatre seem very happy. On Sixth Avenue there are two stores where you can buy colored photographs of naked men and women, displaying their genitals. One can see as much in many Italian cathedrals. It rains. The sound, the voice of New York for me is the sound of taxi horns reverberating off walls. It is not a sad sound, but it is far from cheerful.

•

What I think of as "the maldispositions" continues. This is the longest stretch I can recall. It began in Majorca early in July, and now, with snow expected, continues. Slammed doors, venomous remarks, a general attitude of revulsion and contempt. I think frequently of S., although this could be just another dream girl. She sleeps. She is beautiful. There is a wide hem to her nightgown. She is fragrant, graceful, intelligent. She wakes. Is it raining? Yes. Your hair is wet. I went out and closed the car windows. I kiss her and laugh. Did you get terribly

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wet? Not terribly. I dried myself off with a towel. I can't hear the waves. There aren't any. It's calm. It usually is in the rain. I'm going back to sleep. Good night, my love. Good night.

•

I board the 2:20. As we go through the tunnel the lights in the car flicker and go out. We make our way into the daylight, but the train seems to move haltingly. The uptown slums are being demolished—have been in this process for fourteen years. I am the sort of man who would regret the rats, broken toilets, and fire hazards of a cold-water tenement because its cabbalistic lintels were supported by rams' heads, scrolls, platforms, and other inventions. But the rectangular tenements that replace them have not a trace of invention. Their bleakness is absolute. No man has ever dreamed of a city of such monotonous severity, and there must be some bond between our houses and our dreams. The train makes its halting way as far as Hastings, where it seems to die. All the lights go out. The conductor and the engineer not only refuse to explain what has happened, they are rude. The train shows no signs of life at all; the lights, the ticking and kissing sounds are all gone. It is too dark to read, and the woman across the aisle from me shuts her paperback copy of "Grand Hotel." Our situation is mysterious, and our response seems to be complete passivity. I think of striking up a conversation, but there is no likely companion around. Would it be different in another country? I think not. I leave the haunted train and, with some other passengers, take a cab. An old man laments the death of the railroads. The trains break down regularly. How wonderful they were ten years ago: speedy, luxurious. Now the equipment is obsolete, the roadbeds are dangerous, the staff is surly. . . .

•

And look at poor W.B. in his liquor store shaped like a dark hallway, selling what he knows will be, six times out of ten, a means of death. He knows the symptoms as well as any doctor: the deepening flush, then a bleacher sunburn; the shaking hands; the desperate telephone calls—"Hey, Walt, could you have the taxi rush over a quart of gin? I don't happen to have any money in the apartment, but you know I'm always good for it." They were in many cases intelligent, courageous, and gallant, but they were headed straight for the cold-turkey ward of the county hospital.

•

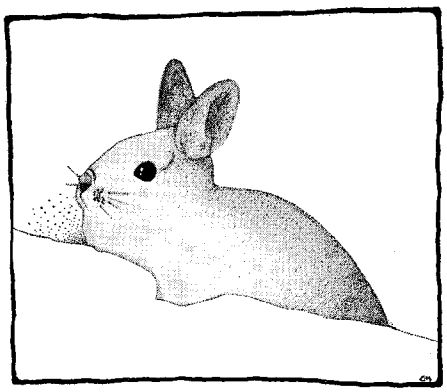
Bill Faversham stepped into the bathroom to brush his teeth and found his wife, Martha, in the tub, but she had closed the shower curtains and was invisible. Bill, in a mood that was much more lighthearted than lewd, opened the curtains for a look at her breasts. They were, in a sense, his breasts; he had worshipped them, kissed them, clothed them, and taken them around the world. He parted the curtain innocently, as one might go to a window to see the sky. She gave him a look of pain that was withering, and sank deeper into the water so that nothing could be seen. He turned back to the washbasin. Cheerfulness was obviously his best target, and he banged away at this, knocking down a few of the travelling ducks; but a blow had been dealt, and dealt at an area of his spirit that was already lacerated. He went down to the living room, not so much wounded or angry as astonished at the traumatic and reverberative nature of his experience. He had no coherent memory for ecstasy or pain, but an acute experience of either was a sudden revelation of the sum of his memory. The present seemed like some modest, lighted table at which four people played Russian bank, but beyond them was some dark and cavernous backstage, hung with sandbags and the scenery for yesterday's garden and tomorrow's forest. The present claimed to be supreme, but the truth seemed to lie somewhere between the lighted card table and the cavernous wilderness.

The only light in the living room was the moon. The night was cold and so was the room. It was, or seemed to him, a cluttered room. Any taste for simplicity that Martha may have had seemed to have vanished as she approached her fifties, and every surface was covered with porcelain lions, sets of luster, pots of china flowers, agate paperweights, etc. It made him feel a stranger there. Then he decided to change his name. He had done this before. He was not Bill Faversham. Bill Faversham was flying over the Urals in an Aeroflot 707, a frightened little man sneaking drinks of vodka from a flask concealed in his jacket. He was Tom Brown, Farmer Brown's oldest son, a natural man, a little stupid perhaps, but a free spirit, genuinely loving. He was not Bill Faversham nor was this his house; it was merely a place he had stepped into to get out of the cold. He had no investment in the porcelain lions; he had no investment in the withering look of pain Martha had given him. I am Tom Brown, and this is a strange place where I have come in to spend the night.

The discovery, it seemed, of something invincible in himself, clean, free, and strong, was so strenuous that he threw out his arms and braced his back. "I do not live here," he said happily, ecstatically. "I do not live here, I do not live here, and my name is Tom Brown." Then he loped up the stairs, parted the shower curtain again, kissed his wife's breasts, and went to bed.

•

The contemptuous silence goes on for another day. We drive to a Chinese restaurant for dinner. Mary says nothing. I joke and talk with my son. Our jokes may be childish and banal, and I may be drunk, but this would hardly account for her formidable silence. The restaurant is crowded, and I am pleased at the sight of families eating good food. They are mostly families, large tables of parents, children, and grandchildren. Mary does not speak throughout the meal. Since I observe the others, I wonder what the others would make of us. My son's face is cheerful, his color is high. I may seem loud and drunk, but what would they make of this haughty woman who does not speak during the four-course dinner? She is thought to be good-looking —sometimes beautiful. Her clothing is fashionable and expensive. Why is it that she will not speak to her husband, will not answer his questions, will not even look in his direction? She serves herself and her son. She pointedly does not serve her husband. He asks to be



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served, and if he is to be faulted this is it. She pushes the serving dish in his direction, looking away. She manages to make this simple gesture contemptuous. Have you ever seen people like that in a restaurant? I mean, have you ever seen a man and his wife come into a restaurant and the wife not speak a word during the whole meal? She doesn't seem dreamy, or angry, or even sad, and he seems not to mind terribly. He talks and jokes with the children. But have you ever seen anything like that?

She is silent on the trip home. I am angry, and I don't understand. Sometimes I think I am being provoked to physical cruelty. Her father once beat her cruelly, and I sometimes think she drifts back to this scene. She does not treat all men with contempt. I saw her kissing D. in the pantry a week ago. I think these flirtations—whatever—may be some part of the wish to humiliate and destroy; but I may be wrong. Anyhow, we return and she settles down to read the bound galleys of a book sent to me (I claim) by a friend. I think of taking the book out of her hand and tossing it into the brook. It is, after all, mine. However, this is not, even drunkenly, my kind of thing. I watch TV with Federico. When there is something funny I call her attention to it, but there is no response. Since I think anger despicable, I decide to make a stab at mending my fences with a kiss. I get neither the lip nor the cheek. What I get is a feeling of revulsion as shocking as a charge of electricity.

I may imagine all of this, of course, but I come away from my attempted kiss with the feeling that I have brushed not against madness but against obsceneness, wickedness, malice, and evil. I am shaken. I fall asleep, and wake when she enters the bedroom. "Did you finish the book?" I ask. "Yes." The reply is nearly inaudible. "Did you like it?" She replies to this by closing the door and running her bath. These are small matters, very small, really, and yet I cannot sleep. I go naked to the dining room and sit in the dark, as I have done a hundred times before. I cannot take a Seconal. I seem allergic to sleeping drugs. I drink a little whiskey and think about mountains, streams, the back streets of Rome. I sit in the dark until two or later and, feeling drowsy, go back to sleep.

•

Assuming that there is some sort of absolution in recording the most tedious and mistaken conduct, I will set down that the following took place. The morning was unpleasant, and the few words spoken were wounding. "Won't you at least let him finish a sentence?" That kind of thing. I drink. That is a great help. It seems, in fact, to be the only way I have of remaining relaxed. I am left alone after lunch, and I wander through the rooms thinking how happy I am to be free of a censorious presence. I will go to the B.s' for cocktails. I will play games with A. But then I think I will do none of this. I am tired; I am tired of these dreary social occupations. I am a man, a free man: I will drive into New York, I will take a hotel room, I will screw H., and take S. to the big dancing party. Pow. This is partly genuine enthusiasm, partly gin. I sit in the yellow chair with a drink, seeming to be the object of the attentions of two forces—stamina and inertia—represented by

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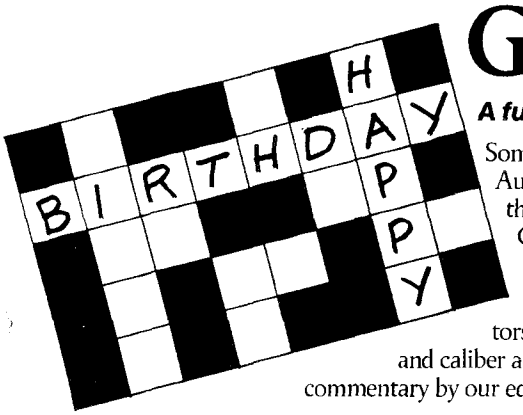

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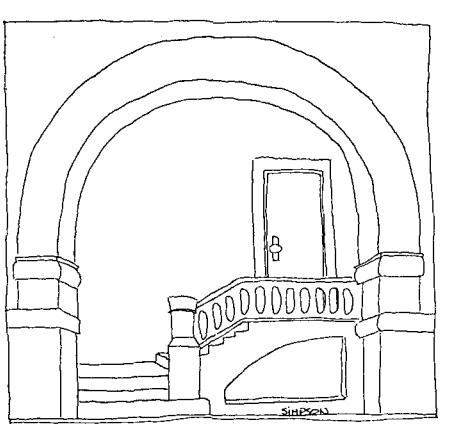
two presences as subtle as the representation of good and evil in some comic strip. I will go, I will liberate myself, I will relish life! I have another drink to steel my nerves for the drive. It is late afternoon, and the snow on the lawns has begun to turn from gold to blue.

The first thing is to write a note, and I do this. Then I must pack. This takes, I think, another drink. Shirts, drawers, Seconal and Miltown, a brown suit for the seduction and a dark suit for the party. What next? Call New York and reserve a room. But why go to all this trouble? says the voice of Inertia. Why not go to the B.s' and have a drink in front of their fire? Change, move, enjoy your freedom, says Stamina, and I call New York and reserve a room. But what about dinner? It is already too late to make a date, and I don't want to dine alone in a hotel. Watching the light fail, I think that the traffic will be heaviest at this hour. I am in no rush to get to the city. I put into the oven a frozen serving of Salisbury steak with sauce, take the tires and the car cover from the back of my car, have another pleasant drink, and then eat my steak. Now night has fallen, and I am a little drowsy. Why not take a nap and leave for New York at around nine? I can walk the streets and go to bed early so that I will be particularly potent for H. after lunch. I lie down and fall into a deep—not to say drunken—sleep for an hour. Then I stir myself once more, carry my bag out to the car, write another note, fill my flask, and drink a little more, because it is a well-known fact that I cannot drive when I am sober. I start the car, find that the speedometer is broken and that I have no gasoline. I head for the nearest gas station—a few miles away—and observe that my vision is bad, my driving dangerous. I think this is because my head cold has weakened my alcoholic tolerance. I turn back at the gas station and drive home. I destroy the note, cancel the hotel reservation, unpack my toothbrush and my pills, undress, and climb into bed. I sleep soundly.

•

It is the morning of the day when I will see H. Mary's contemptuous and weary voice cannot reach me in any way, since I am the beloved of a young, beautiful, and passionate woman. I take three heavy scoops to relax for the train trip, although I'm not quite sure they take hold. On the train I sit beside a good-looking woman who seems appalled and terrified by my presence and perhaps by the fumes of gin that must roll off me. I hope to reassure her by reading the *Times* very carefully—including all the editorials, financial page, and sporting section. This seems to work, and a little past Yonkers we get into a pleasant, sympathetic conversation. I am early, and, like all countrymen who are early in the city, I begin to walk. I walk up to the Sixties, cut over to Fifth, have a drink, walk down to Forty-second Street, loiter in a bookstore, and finally beat my way back to the hotel. I have a head cold and am not sober. I go up to H.'s room.

It is not as good as it was a year ago. I somehow—hooch and a head cold—can't get quite on the beam. She's left her husband, and had, I guess, several affairs with celebrated cocksmen, and her infatuation for my thighs seems to have waned, if not died. She is still terribly pretty, and her figure is astonishingly beautiful, the breasts high and full, the waist very small. She is a year older, and I think I can see this in her face. It is a year during which she worked very hard, and there are new lines around her eyes. Her shine is a little dim. Her hair is a curious shade of pink, some hairdresser's triumph. It cannot be caressed ardently, and I dislike this, but I don't say so. I am very happy in her company but not, as I was last year, ecstatic. She laughs at my jokes and says that I look much better than I did. Stoned and with a runny nose, I don't see how this could be possible. We lunch and return to the room, but the kissing is halfhearted, and when I suggest a fuck she says gently that she somehow doesn't feel like it. The fish she ate for lunch. . . I say it doesn't matter. She is expecting a



friend at three, and before that, after a display of drunken foolishness, I kiss her goodbye.

On the train home I sit beside a drunken salesman, who calls everyone by his first name and who is marketing a portable oxygen mask. He urges me to try it, and I do—with no appreciable effects. I think this terribly funny, but when I reach home and start to tell my story Mary says, "I would like to hear your funny story, but I have to go to the bathroom." I don't terribly mind the statement or even the fact, but I do mind that it seems to display a kind of feeling that I don't understand. I talk freely about H. I see no reason—and this may be my stupidity—why I shouldn't.

•

Palm Sunday, and I do not go to church to receive that leaf, or frond, that is meant to bless my house. Last year I was in a plaster cast; this year I am on the ropes. On the evening of our anniversary it seemed as though things might be as they had been, for better and for worse. It was the best hour we've had in months. But things are dim in the morning, and grow dimmer, I think, as the day passes, until by late afternoon Mary has stopped speaking altogether. I wash a Seconal down with whiskey and check out.

•

So New York–Fairbanks–Tokyo–Seoul and off into the country of love. Why should it be so like the seasons—a cruel winter and a clement spring? Loving and being loved, I hear the mourning doves. It has been more than a year since their singing—billing—has meant anything but regret, bitterness, and mystification.

What, then, do I remember vividly? The fishbone pines in Fairbanks. This outpost. The light in the sky is gray, but there has been no diminishment of its brilliance for fifteen hours. The faculty wives from Akron, wearing dead flowers and carrying bottles of home-town water. What a waste of time to ridicule them. They are out to see the world, and what is wrong with that? They will have some excitement, pleasure, a dossier of colored photographs, and diarrhea, athlete's foot, anti-American riots, and the peril and fear of sudden death in the Bering Sea. The smog in Tokyo obscures the city

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and its mountain. The cabdriver wears a surgical mask. "Made in Japan" was a watchword of my youth. Almost everything for sale in that paradise—the five-and-ten-cent store—was made in Japan. Goldfish, toys, screwdrivers, can openers, beads were all made in Japan. That city, bombed and firestormed, is long gone, but on street corners you sometimes see an old house with curved eaves that was made in Japan.

•

Whatever happened to Johnny Cheever? Did he leave his typewriter out in the rain?

•

Thunder wakes me at midnight. I go from room to room, closing the doors and windows. A bolt strikes close to the house. I smell cordite. What will we find split in the morning? The birch, the tulip tree, the ash? The dogs are frightened, the lights go out. I mount my beloved, and off we go for the best ride in a long time.

•

I cannot describe the Mass without describing my friend, and I cannot describe him in these pages. He was genuinely volatile, eccentric, capable of great physical and intellectual velocity. He never spoke to me of his conversion to the Church of Rome. I cannot guess at his motives. He is buried outside the gates of that city, and the Mass yesterday was performed without his remains and without his widow, who is in London. The architecture of the church was contemporary and highly decorative along lines that in their conspicuous simplicity seemed Oriental to me. What I mean to say is that the usual threadbare iconography of Christendom—the worn carpets, the tarnished vigil lights, the vestments from Brussels—were all gone. Behind the chancel was a rotunda of pale-yellow marble. All the colors or the lack of color was what one finds in a Shinto shrine. An enormous figure in an attitude of blessing hung behind the altar. The three priests faced the congregation. One wore white robes, one's robes were ornamented with fishes, and the third's with a new moon and a cross. In spite of all this elegance, the architect had miscalculated acoustically, and I couldn't hear the Epistle, the Gospel, or the eulogy. The Mass was in English, but I thought it beautiful—a full choir and organ thundering in with the responses. But what one thinks is what it must have cost—one sees Mr. F. on the telephone talking with the priest. "He was a very brilliant associate and we would like a suitable ceremony." "Organ?" "Yes." "A full choir will come to a thousand." "Money, under the circumstances, is of course no consideration, and we will of course make a substantial contribution to the church." "Would you like one, two, or three priests?" "Three, please."

We were a small congregation—really a handful—but he was never a man with a circle of friends. We seemed outmaneuvered by the richness of the church, and surely we were outnumbered by the choir.

•

Happy, happy, happy. I spend the afternoon boiling lobsters, swim, suffer a mild seizure of gin nastiness, plan to take Federico fishing, but we can find no plugs, and the bait store is closed. I see S. tomorrow, but, since Mary is yielding, I have no wish or need for clipping and kissing behind pantry doors. A brilliant day.

•

So we see once more the serene novelist whose antics have bored us for ten years. He is left alone from noon until dark and goes to pieces. He reads, misreads, drinks, snoozes, repeats vulgar and stupid anecdotes at great length, and is contemptible. I must do better.

•

E. comes over, and we tell each other the stories of our lives; two men of fifty-eight in an empty house. The talk drifts toward money. This does not annoy me as it did. I remember little of what was said. Beautiful, beautiful D. is now sixty years old and proud of the fact that she has been screwed by at least a thousand men. I think of swimming, but I am lame from pushing the mower—this is unusual—and feel tired. The sulfa drug I take seems soporific. I eat a cheese sandwich and a piece of melon in the twilight, take a bath, and go to bed before the stars are out. I wake—I don't know the hour. I am soaked with sweat and shiver convulsively at any touch of the night air; but there is some serenity to this condi-

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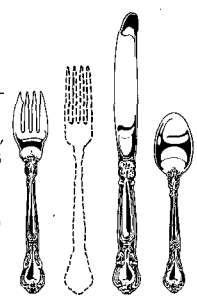
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tion. I am sick and I am calm. I dream that some maid is driving nails into the highboy. I explain to her that it is three hundred years old (a lie). "Well, it's about time you threw it away," she says. I see my family—Susie, Rob, Ben, Linda, Mary, and Federico—and how much I love them, how perfect is my contentment! This seems to be not love but a perfect equation in which light is exchanged. And, half asleep, I think I see some way of getting back into my work. It is the old image of spatial arrangements—not tables and chairs but abstract form. The light is sombre but not dim, not soft, a strong, pure gray light. By moving the forms, by changing the spaces between them, something seems to be accomplished. A voice from somewhere says, This is neither erotic nor spiritual. I see a rock pool in Maine, filled at high tide. I wonder if there is any erotic cause for my excitement. I think not. The pool seems beautiful and serene.

•

Make love in the meadow; me not peerless. I scar my naked hip on a wild rose.

•

Thunderstorms, polished air; the light seems honed, buffed, and, late in the day, strikes from a low angle. I swim at around four, but the poignance of a swimming pool in September seems to have lost its legitimacy for me. The pool is real enough and is the crux, the truth of a humid afternoon. There are leaves in the water these days. I am the last swimmer. The wind in the leaves is highly vocal. The light is pure and very elegiac. I enjoy swimming at this time of year. The water is in the sixties. The stones are warm in the sun and I lie naked on them. Happy, happy.

•

The place where they all went. This could be a dream. Who are they? Old girlfriends; barmen; barbers; the friends you make on beaches, on boats, in the army; maids; gardeners; clerks; salesmen; backgammon, football, softball, and bridge partners; all those for whom you felt intensely, briefly, and who have vanished, who, for all you know, might be dead. They are not. They live, those hundreds, on a key between the inland waterway and the Gulf of Mexico, a place that has to be reached by boat. Why have they, so to speak, given up; why have they retired; why have they stopped mixing drinks, cutting hair, cracking jokes, writing books and poetry, teaching school, meeting lovers, dancing, raking leaves; why have they stepped out of that landscape where they seemed to belong? They don't seem to know, or if they do they seem unwilling to say so. They are not terribly old or infirm. They are mostly in their early fifties. Their smiles are still friendly, a little retiring these days, but they still have the gift of making a most casual exchange—setting a drink on the bar—seem immediate, friendly, and absorbing, the citizens of an easygoing planet. Why did they all go away?

•

Rain in the night. Three A.M. Very fucky but no cigar. At nine we go up the hill to see the night-blooming cereus perform.

•

Today gloomy and humid. I walk the dogs in a heavy rain. Water lilies grow at the edge of the pond. I want to pick some and take them home to Mary. I decide that this is foolish. I am a substantial man of fifty-eight, and I will walk past the lilies in a dignified manner. Having made this decision, I strip off my clothes, dive into the pond, and pick a lily. I will be dignified tomorrow.

•

My routine has been to write a page or so on "Artemis"—no more—and mix a drink at ten. This means, since I cannot write and drink, that my working day is very brief. Now, for the first time in more than a month, I have a desk, a lamp, and a place where I can keep my papers. I'm back in a summer country.

•

There would not be much point in describing these last days. On Tuesday we were lovers and on Wednesday warriors. I am told that I am an insane shit, that even when I am loving I am a shit. She is planning to leave, which will be the second time this week. What I will forget and never mention is what I heard at dinner. "What is worse for a woman: to marry a man with a bad

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prostate or to marry a homosexual?" But where does this venom originate? I might say that she dislikes men, but I know this isn't so. She hates me much of the time, but naturally I can't understand why anyone should hate me.

•

So I think work, work, work—that will be the solution to all my problems. Work will give meaning to my unhappiness. Work will give reason to my life. Twenty minutes later my mind strays to the gin bottle, and I will presently follow.

•

When I get the mixture right, as I seem to have done last night, my gratitude is immense, my gratitude is spiritual. Work, work, work, I say, love, love, love, and I can rewrite the first of "Artemis" or sketch in the remaining narrative. Thinking of the booze fight, I seem willing to settle for this battlefield rather than go to a dry-out farm. It is a battlefield, and I've been advancing and retreating for fifteen years. The last weeks have seen many losses, but today the enemy seems quiet or occupied on some other front.

•

I am disappointed in "Artemis," disappointed and at times frightened, but I think, later in the day, that I can bring it off. It lacks density and enthusiasm, and my search for another method, a new method, has not been successfully completed. Keep trying.

•

The first word I hear on Christmas day in the morning is "shit." I think perhaps I should have an affair with a man. I will go to X and say, "I'll let you have me," and he will laugh and say, "You're twenty years too late. You might, you just might have passed twenty years ago, but now you're nothing but a potbellied old jerk."

•

And so we celebrate the birth of Christ. Let man receive his King.

—JOHN CHEEVER

(This is the second of two parts. A final selection, from later decades, will appear in future issues.)

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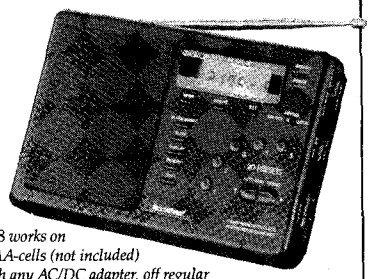

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THE COMPLETE ACTOR

DURING his years as head of Britain's National Theatre, Peter Hall always wanted to present a revival of Brecht's "The Life of Galileo." Finally, when he had obtained the rights to the play from the Brecht estate and had the financing for the production, he turned to the question of casting. Colin Blakely and Albert Finney were high on the list of logical candidates for the monumental title role, but Hall—to the astonishment of his associates—reached into the ranks of those who had worked at the National and chose Michael Gambon, who had built his reputation principally in plays by Alan Ayckbourn, Simon Gray, and Harold Pinter. At the time, Gambon was appearing, under Hall's direction, in Pinter's "Betrayal." Though Gambon was admired as an actor, he was not generally considered to have the weight or the authority for "Galileo." A number of directors rejected the offer to stage the play, precisely because of their doubts about the actor's suitability. Hall, who did not want to direct the play himself, was adamant about his casting. He was convinced that Gambon was "a gentle actor" but also one with "catastrophic power."

Eventually, John Dexter agreed to direct. After a difficult rehearsal period, the play opened, and it became a transforming experience for the actor. Gambon not only rose to the challenge but far exceeded all expectations. He was, in fact, a masterly Galileo, rivalling memories of Charles Laughton, who had created the part for Brecht, and setting a standard for those who might be daring enough to follow him.

On opening night, August 13, 1980, with bravos echoing through the Olivier Theatre, Gambon returned to his dressing room on a wave of euphoria. At the National, the dressing rooms are aligned on four levels surrounding a quadrangle. As Gambon started to remove his makeup, he heard applause from across the quadrangle and walked to the window to investigate. The applause grew to a roar of approval. All the actors—and there were more than forty in the company—came to their windows and gave him a long and

Michael Gambon

thunderous ovation. This spontaneous collective tribute to a fellow-actor from a normally restrained and competitive group of people was unprecedented in the history of the National (and has not been repeated). "I stood at the window and wept my eyes out," Gambon recalls. The next day, the critics followed with their accolades in print. A major classical actor had been discovered.

Ayckbourn was one of many people who were elated by Gambon's triumph. He said that when Gambon appeared in his comedies he had been "using about a fifteenth of his range," and added, "We were using a sledgehammer to crack nuts with." The play unlocked career doors for Gambon. "It tipped me into the heavyweight league," he said. During the next ten years, he moved back and forth, with equal brilliance, from classics to contemporary plays, from tragedy to comedy, and now, at the age of fifty, he is recognized as the most protean and prodigious of English actors.

Gambon arrives at his eminence during a time when English acting is being revitalized. After the knights of the English theatre—Laurence Olivier, John Gielgud, and Ralph Richardson—who dominated the stage for so many years, there was a falling off. For various reasons, a number of actors did not live up to their potential. They were followed by a new generation of actors—Gambon, Ian McKellen, Alan Howard, Derek Jacobi, Anthony Hopkins, Brian Cox, Jonathan Pryce, among others—each of whom is enjoying a distinguished career. And there is an oncoming battalion of exceptional actors, led by Daniel Day-Lewis, Antony Sher, Simon Callow, and Kenneth Branagh. Today, there are many legitimate contenders for the acting crown, but Gambon, because of his virtuosity and his fearlessness in performance, has the clearest claim to it.

Before "Galileo," Sir Ralph Richardson began calling him the Great Gambon. He has always been amused by that label. It was, he says, as if Richardson considered him "a circus act." In a metaphorical sense, that is not an inaccurate description. As an actor, Gambon is both a high-wire trapeze flier and a clown doing pratfalls in the sawdust: after galvanizing audiences in "Galileo," he conquered King Lear and then Antony in "Antony and Cleopatra" at Stratford-Upon-Avon, yet he is also a farceur of uncommon distinction. He has caused theatregoers literally to fall into the aisles with rollicking laughter. In an actor's equivalent of the trapeze artist's triple somersault in midair, he played three totally disparate roles in repertory in the 1986-87 season at the National: a buffoon of a butler in a revival of the old Aldwych farce "Tons of Money"; a seemingly incorruptible entrepreneur turned gangster in Ayckbourn's serious comedy "A Small Family Business"; and, most challenging of all, a visceral incarnation of Eddie Carbone, the Italian-American longshoreman, in Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge."

For Americans who are not frequent travellers to London, Gambon was unknown until "The Singing Detective," Dennis Potter's 1986 fantasy-filled film noir for television, in which the actor gave a mesmerizing performance as an imaginative invalid with delusions of private-eye grandeur. Last fall, he took time off from his West End and film careers to go to Ayckbourn's regional home, the Stephen Joseph Theatre in the Round, in Scarborough, to play

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Othello—his second outing in the role—and also to play a bumbling suburban businessman in a revival of an Ayckbourn farce, "Taking Steps." Later this year, he will begin filming a series of television movies based on Georges Simenon's Inspector Maigret mysteries, in which he will portray the celebrated French detective. Offers are lined up to carry him into 1992, beginning with invitations from both the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre to play Falstaff whenever the time is convenient.

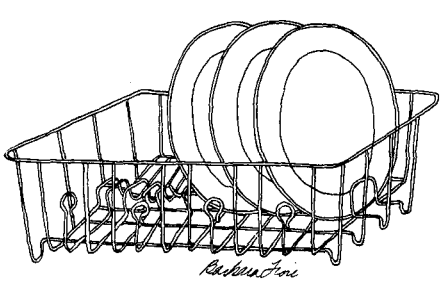
The usually terse Harold Pinter, who has worked with Gambon in diverse capacities—as a playwright, a director, a screenwriter, and even a fellow-actor (in a radio version of "Betrayal")—becomes uncharacteristically expansive in talking about Gambon. "There is no question about it," he says. "Over the past fourteen years, a great actor has come about. It's a pity they haven't yet seen him on Broadway. He really has just about everything—enormous power, great depth, absolute expertise. He goes for the heart of the matter, and does it most economically and totally without sentimentality. He can arrest and compel. At the center of all this, he is a most delicate actor. I've worked with Olivier, Richardson, Gielgud, Scofield, Redgrave, Guinness, and Peggy Ashcroft, the greats of English acting, and Michael Gambon is in that category."

Adrian Noble, the newly appointed artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, who directed Gambon both as Lear and as Antony, compares him to Edmund Kean, as in Coleridge's famous description: "To see him act is like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning." Of Gambon's Lear he says, "He never understood how great he was as that character. He has the credentials and the potential to be one of that very, very small charmed circle of greats. He's just outside it, because he doesn't believe it. He thinks acting is just mucking about. That's what he'll say—it's just mucking about."

For the English, Olivier represented passion, Gielgud represents lyricism, and Richardson, the most underrated of the three, was the supreme character actor. No one would ever confuse Gambon with Gielgud—McKellen would be a closer comparison—but he combines the boldness of Olivier with the blissful eccentricity of Richardson. In common with Richardson, he looks like the most ordinary of men. Depending on what he wears, he could be mistaken for a factory worker (which is what he was before he became an actor), or, in his self-description, the manager of a department store. Dennis Potter speaks of his "stodgy and puddingy" look, then switches analogies to say, "He's a bit like an old pair of shoes."

In a crowd, Gambon might be the last person you would identify as an actor. No wonder that when he went to Buckingham Palace to be made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, in 1990, Queen Elizabeth whispered to her equerry before the investiture, "What's it for?" The aide whispered back, "Acting." Certainly, when she knighted Gielgud, or, more recently, Peter Ustinov, there was no such confusion. Gambon's looks are a key to his range. He can change from clown to warrior, from Everyman to every inch a king. Last year, when he played Ayckbourn and Othello, he was courted by Peter Hall to portray Hermann Göring in Romulus Linney's "2," about the Nuremberg war-crimes trials. Though he has skipped several traditional acting steps (he was never a "juv," in actors' parlance, and he has never played Hamlet or Romeo), there seems to be little that is beyond his grasp.

In performance, Gambon is more than a chameleon. There is something chimerical about his role-playing. Just as his face is an empty canvas ready to be filled with expressiveness, his body alters its shape in performance. Although by his own description he is "a big-boned bloke," he seemed small when he played a timid soul in Ayckbourn's "Man of the Moment." Yet as Eddie Carbone he was a titan striding the waterfront. In "The Singing Detective," as the psoriasis-ravaged Philip Marlow, in dream sequences he leaves his hospital bed to become a dashing and dapper singer.



And as Lear he seemed to shrink into old age. Trying to explain this immense malleability, Peter Hall says, "He seems to be able to turn his sense of physical bulk on and off at will. He can play small men of small temperament, and he can play vast brutes. He is like those great actors of France and Germany who are marinated in every kind of classical role and seem able to do anything. I think he gets inside a character and changes himself much more than the conventional classical actor. Fate gave him genius, but he uses it as a craftsman. He can switch off different areas of his personality and remake himself. Most actors bring the part to themselves. In some curious way, Michael takes himself to the part." Comparing him with Richardson, Hall says, "Both endorse the faults and lunacies of a character, the unsympathetic side, and by doing that make the man more understandable and, finally, sympathetic."

That is, I think, an important clue to Gambon's art, and may well be one reason that Hall thought of him to play Göring as well as Galileo. Where other actors might try to disguise the faults of a character, Gambon accepts them as integral traits. And he demonstrated as Galileo that he is one of those rare actors who are capable of personifying creativity. It would be easy—and accurate—to say that he is a natural, but there is more to his acting than that. Despite a lack of intellectualism, he has a probing mind, the keenest powers of observation, and the integrity of an Old Master portraitist. He feels his way into a role and then takes an imaginative leap into another man's psyche. Like Richardson, he subscribes to the theory that acting is "like being in a dream."

In personal and practical terms, Gambon's work is "a compulsion." He once said to me, "I don't really like it. I *have* to do it. I've been an actor for almost thirty years, and I can't do without it. It's a release—something inside you that has to come out. Or maybe you don't know who you are, or maybe you just want to be all sorts of people. That's certainly true of me. I live in a fantasy most of my life. In my offstage life, I'm a pseudo gunsmith, a pseudo pilot, a pseudo expert on this and that. It's all really acting, isn't it? Fundamentally, acting is a deep process of showing off in front of a thousand people, dressing up in costumes and

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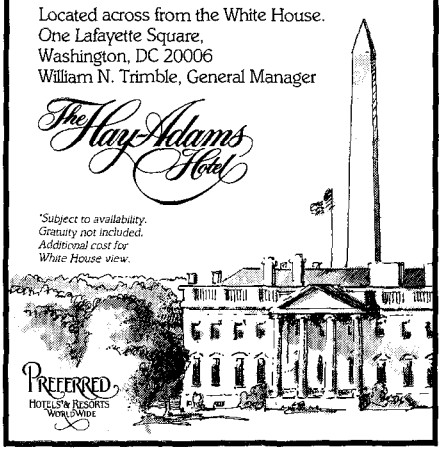

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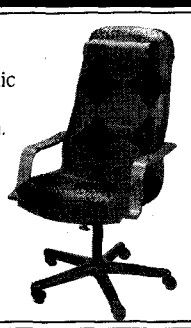

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saying, 'Look at me.' Actors are showoffs, bigheaded bastards, egomaniacs. I can't think of any other reason they act. Can you?"

When I suggested that actors were interpretative artists, he laughed loudly and said, "Well, yeah, but they're still bigheaded bastards."

I drew a parallel between actors and musicians, mentioning Arthur Rubinstein as an exemplar of the interpretative artist, and Gambon suddenly became assertive about what he considers to be the most important difference.

"It didn't matter what Rubinstein looked like," he said. "He had a piano, which is a solid thing—and this great skill. He was lucky. Actors just have this." He pointed at himself. "And it's fuck-all they can do about it."

Though Gambon is six feet tall, he seems larger; he has a barrel chest and a tendency to put on weight. Because his hair is thin and receding, his face seems quite broad. He usually wears a mustache, of varying dimensions and styles, and sometimes a full beard. His eyes, which are gray, are heavy-lidded; in repose, he can look faintly Oriental. To those who know him well or watch him closely, his most notable features are his long arms and large hands. He has long, tapered fingers that look as if they had been sculptured in ivory. He uses his hands gracefully, whether he is lighting a cigarette, duelling in a stage battle, or engraving the handle of an antique gun. Searching for ways to describe Gambon in performance, critics have reached for animal imagery, comparing him to a lion, a bear, a gorilla, and, in one bizarre instance, a giant sea anemone. Amenable even to the anemone, the actor supposed that that was a reference to his long arms. Gambon's feet are also unusual. One is size 12, the other twelve and a half; both are narrow, and nearly impossible to fit. During his only visit to New York, to play an American gangster in the film "State of Grace," he spent what little free time he had looking for shoes—he had heard that New York was the place to buy big shoes. The search proved unprofitable. In London, he generally has his shoes handmade by a bootmaker. "If you looked at him walking along the street, at first glimpse you would think he had a couple of pounds of lead weight in his feet," Dennis Potter says. "Yet there's this nimbleness, and an incredible lightness. The contrast between the immediate physical perception of him and what he can do is very wide indeed." Gambon moves with a long, loping, pantherlike walk that leads him, when he is climbing stairs, to take two steps at a time. His hands and his feet become essential aspects of his performance.

The cliché about English actors—that they are all head and no heart—is belied by Gambon: he projects a rugged masculinity and intensity. In his acting style he is a bridge between England and the United States. As has been said about Marlon Brando, he is unpredictable in performance, bringing with him a sense of surprise, and even of danger. One never knows what Gambon might do next, in either comedy or tragedy. If he had been born in the United States, his career might have paralleled that of Robert De Niro or Dustin Hoffman—a character actor as movie star—but as an Englishman he has the advantage of working regularly in an active theatre and the opportunity of doing classics. Though he is a self-made actor who rose from the working class, he is deeply rooted in the English theatrical tradition. In England, acting is a heritage passed on through the ages, from Burbage to Garrick, from Garrick to Kean and Macready, from them to Irving, and on to Olivier, Gielgud, and Richardson—and Gambon and McKellen. As is also true of great clowns, actors learn and borrow from their predecessors, who borrowed from those who came before them. "The tradition of acting is based on copying," Gambon says.

The actor in Shakespeare walks onstage accompanied by all the actors who earlier assumed the role. One of the most meaningful events in Olivier's life was Gielgud's presentation to him of the sword that Kean had used in playing Richard III. Kenneth Branagh as Henry V had Olivier looking over his shoulder, just as Gambon's Lear was shadowed by Paul Scofield and his Galileo by Charles Laughton. When Gambon finally does Falstaff, he will undoubtedly be influenced by Ralph Richardson, who left his own imprint on the role. This is one reason

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that Gambon has resisted Pinter's suggestion that he play Richardson's role in a revival of Pinter's "No Man's Land" (perhaps with McKellen as the character created by Gielgud). Gambon is in no hurry to challenge the living memory of Richardson.

Only once did Gambon and Richardson appear together onstage, in a short-lived spy thriller called "Alice's Boys," and Gambon did it solely in order to act with Richardson, just as today there are younger actors who will do anything to work in a play with Gambon. Richardson, who was famous for forgetting his lines, would call Gambon's character by different names on different evenings—Bertie, Willy, Billy, Binny, Kinny. "It was terribly, terribly funny" to Gambon, and probably unnerving to the other actors. As for the play, "it was a disaster and it came off in three weeks," Gambon told me. "Richardson stood in the wings one night with an empty house and said to me, 'Oh dear, it's terrible, isn't it?' I said, 'Yes, it is.' He said, 'In the old days, nice people came to the theatre. Now they send their cooks.' "

At the age of twenty-three, Gambon was a member, albeit a lowly one, of Olivier's original National Theatre company, in residence at the Old Vic in the early nineteen-sixties. Along with his colleagues, he watched Olivier "like a hawk," he says. They tried to memorize his moves, to understand what made him a great actor. Reaching for guidelines, they found symbols. Noticing that Olivier habitually wore a copper band around his wrist, ostensibly to ward off arthritis, the younger actors began wearing identical copper bands. To this day, Gambon wears a huge, blockish ring on his little finger, like those worn by Gielgud and Scofield. Amulets and heirlooms can enrich an actor's feeling of consanguinity—the sense that what he does occurs in a grand context.

THERE are as many different routes into the theatre as there are roads leading to London. Olivier studied acting with the legendary Elsie Fogerty while trying to fulfill his minister father's surprising prediction that he would go on the stage. Richardson, who came from a family of painters, left art school to become an actor. Gielgud grew up with a long theatrical pedigree. For him, as for the Redgraves, to be anything but an actor

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might be considered an act of family treachery. Increasingly, actors have been training for the theatre as they might train for law or medicine. Such is the case with McKellen and Jacobi; their talent was cultivated at university. Annually, young men and women march out of Oxford and Cambridge, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA), and London's Central School of Speech and Drama and make their mark in the theatre. Often they go to work in companies run by other Oxonians and Cantabrigians.

Gambon's Cambridge was the Vickers Armstrong factory, in Kent, and his RADA was amateur theatre in North London. He had less than a high-school education and no knowledge of theatre as either literature or performance. When he first appeared in classics, he had neither read nor seen the plays in which he was performing. That remained true even as he graduated to larger roles. Today, there are still enormous gaps in his background. He does not read plays, including Shakespeare, except when he is offered a role in one. In the case of several Shakespearean plays, like "Titus Andronicus," he still does not know how the plot comes out. In a field that encourages feelings of self-importance and narcissism, he is resolutely down-to-earth. It might be said that Gambon is a rude mechanical, like Bottom the weaver or Snug the joiner, but one who became a great actor.

Michael John Gambon was born in Dublin, on October 19, 1940, the first of three children in the family of Edward and Mary Gambon. He believes that the name is of Spanish derivation, brought to the Irish coast during the days of the Spanish Armada. Nowhere in the family tree is there anyone remotely resembling an artist. The Gambons were definably working class. One of Michael's few memories of Ireland is of "looking out the window and seeing a funeral with a big black hearse and horses with plumes—a very powerful image." At the beginning of the Second World War, Edward Gambon moved to London to look for work. During the war, he was a reserve policeman. In 1945, his family joined him in London, and he took a job in a factory. The Gambons settled in Camden Town, in North London.

As a child, Michael played on bomb sites left over from the war and was an altar boy at St. Aloysius Catholic Church. As was also true of Olivier and Gielgud, the ritualistic side of religion was his first theatrical experience. When he was thirteen, he joined the Sea Cadet Corps, the nautical equivalent of the Boy Scouts—a sign of his feeling for role-playing. In his mind he could be Midshipman Gambon sailing to Australia. From an early age, he had a penchant for making up stories. "I've always been a liar," he says. "I think all children fib. That's part of the excitement of being a child." He regaled school friends with invented yarns about his father's voyages to Africa. Actually, the farthest his father travelled was to the factory where he worked—and his son's life seemed destined to be equally limited. "I hardly had a childhood," he says. "It was all over so quickly."

There was never a thought about Michael's having a higher education, and, in any case, his grades would probably not have allowed him to attend a university. In 1955, at fifteen, living with his parents near Crayford, in Kent, he left school and took a job sweeping floors and serving tea in a factory that made radio and television sets. Soon he moved to a nearby tool-and-die works, to which he was attracted because the employees wore white coats. Then, after passing a qualifying examination, he shifted to Vickers Armstrong, which made everything from shotguns to sewing machines; he signed indentures to begin a five-year apprenticeship leading to a job as a tool-and-die maker. He was sixteen years old, and he loved the work. Vickers particularly appealed to him because he was very much interested in antique guns. From the time that Michael was twelve, his father had visited markets and brought home firearms and swords, which were hung on the walls of the boy's room.

When Michael began work at Vickers, he had only two passing cultural interests—going to the movies (his favorite actor at the time was James Dean) and playing jazz on the banjo. One day, he walked past the Erith Playhouse, an amateur theatre near his home, and noticed a sign that read "BACKSTAGE HELP REQUIRED." He was drawn through the door, and, at seventeen, he volunteered to work as a set builder, without pay. Because of his mechanical aptitude, the work came easily. He had never gone to a play, although he thought that the theatre might be vaguely related to the James Dean movies he liked so much. He drifted from carpentry into acting. His first bit part was in a forgotten one-act play called "Orange Blossom." To his astonishment, he liked being onstage. "I went *varoom!*" he recalls. "I thought, Jesus, this is for me. I want to be an actor." In theatre, he also found a sense of family.

In 1957, looking for theatrical work, he came across an advertisement in a theatre magazine. The ad, placed by the Unity Theatre in North London, read "Actors and actresses always required for near-professional productions." He remembered that when he was six years old he had played in the street outside the Unity. After joining the company, Gambon once again gradually moved from set construction to acting, and had his first encounter with political theatre. He appeared in a number of roles, one of the most prominent being that of Buck Mulligan in an adaptation of "Ulysses." In a photograph of that production, Gambon, age eighteen, in top hat and tails, looks urbane beyond his years. One might have guessed that he had a future playing older characters. Throughout his teens, he worked a double shift—in the factory in Kent by day and in amateur theatricals in London by night, commuting an hour from one to the other. The factory workers who knew about his moonlighting scoffed. They thought of acting as "a bit limp wristed," he said. Acting with various troupes led him, finally, to a single Sunday-night performance in a play entitled "The Sea at Dauphin" at the Royal Court Theatre; he was the only white actor in a black company. He was so excited by the prospect of appearing at the Royal Court that he repeatedly walked in through the stage door and out again, around Sloane Square and back again, hoping that someone would see him and recognize him as an actor. "I was totally stagestruck," he says.

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"I've always loved the romantic side of the theatre."

Gambon began to think that theatre might become at least a near-profession, and in 1962 sent a number of letters applying for employment. One of the applications went to Hilton Edwards and Michaél MacLiammóir, the celebrated actor-managers of the Gate Theatre, in Dublin. Gambon invented a résumé, moving his amateur roles to the professional category and making up others. With an air of bravado, he told Edwards and MacLiammóir that he was flying to New York from London and would be passing through Dublin and could stop by and see them. After Edwards agreed to a meeting, Gambon flew to Dublin. Asked what roles he had played recently, he quickly answered Marchbanks in "Candida," in the West End. There had just been a production of the play, and he didn't think anyone would remember who had played Marchbanks. Apologizing for not being able to offer him any good parts, Edwards asked him if he would play the Second Gentleman of Cyprus in "Othello." This struck Gambon as an insignificant offer to someone who had just played Marchbanks in the West End, but, having never played Marchbanks and having never been near the West End, he did not hesitate to accept it.

Following the Dublin engagement and a brief European tour with the Irish company, the Second Gentleman of Cyprus returned to London and began actively pursuing his new career while keeping half a hand in his old one. After playing a small role in a Christmas show, he became an understudy in and an assistant stage manager for Spike Milligan's absurdist comedy "The Bed-Sitting Room," at the Duke of York's Theatre. When the actor whom Gambon understudied wanted to take a night off, he paid Gambon a pound to go on in his place. In January of 1963, at the age of twenty-two, Gambon faced his first West End audience standing on the top of a stepladder, wearing Army boots, a string vest (or undershirt), and a Nazi helmet, and singing "When I Was a Young Man, My Vest Was Always Dirty."

To broaden his opportunities, Gambon enrolled in an improvisational-acting class run by William Gaskill and George Devine at the Royal Court. It turned out to be the only fairly formal theatrical study he has ever undertaken. Meeting Gaskill was a bit of good fortune. When Gaskill moved to the Old Vic as an associate director, later that year, he was instrumental in getting Gambon an audition with Olivier, who was gathering actors for the first National Theatre company. Gambon's story of his audition is one of his favorites, and, as with all such tales, he is fond of embroidering it for dramatic effect. Olivier asked what piece he wanted to perform. Gambon answered, "Richard III." Olivier said, "Which part?" He repeated, "Richard III." Then, with the raw courage of youth, he threw himself into the role that was so deeply identified with Olivier. "Was ever woman in this humor woo'd?" he began, and, swinging his arm to make his point, he caught his ring on a pillar, ripping the skin on his finger and causing blood to flow. From here on, the story becomes magnified. The wound was either superficial or life-endangering. In some versions—the ones told by other actors—Gambon was given first aid by Olivier. In Antony Sher's version, a nurse came to his rescue, and Olivier helped her apply the dressing. In any case, it was the end of the audition. Gambon, wearing a bandage on his hand, returned to his factory job. Later that afternoon, while he was at work, a call came from Olivier's office asking if he would like to join the National, beginning as a spear-carrier. Packing his toolbox, he left the plant immediately, and never returned.

Years later, Olivier wrote that when he formed the company he was searching for actors "who were as capable of playing Richard, Othello, or Lear as I was"—that he wanted "people who were prepared to outgun me . . . the new cream of the British theatre, and I think I got it." Undoubtedly, he was thinking of Peter O'Toole (who opened the National with "Hamlet," in 1963), Robert Stephens, Edward Petherbridge, Anthony Hopkins, Derek Jacobi, Colin Blakely, and Albert Finney. He was certainly not thinking of Gambon, a bulky young bloke in the background of O'Toole's "Hamlet" and Olivier's "Othello." In

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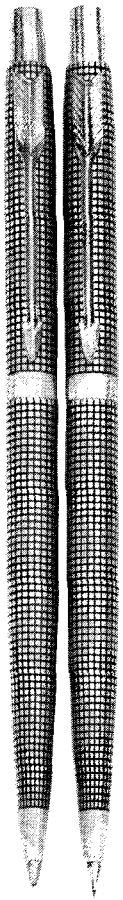

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"Golly, bongos and espresso! You folks haven't changed a bit."

• •

terms of Gambon's theatrical advancement, it might be said that his three and a half years with the National were a waste. It could also be argued that they were his education—a heady immersion in the best of English theatre. "It was like being at university," he said later. "The rehearsals became tutorials. When people sit around and discuss plays, it rubs off on you." On one level, it was an intensive course in Olivier—and what better curriculum could there be for a beginning actor? Looking back on his time at the National, Gambon said that what he remembered most was "fear—and the thrilling presence of Olivier."

Olivier represented acting—and the actor—at the heights. "He knew he was a great actor," Gambon recalled. "He was built for acting. His body was like a triangle. Nothing was out of proportion. He was like an acting machine." Gambon loved Olivier's theatricality—the way he went for effect, even in his curtain calls. Gambon said that after a performance of "Othello" Olivier "would walk down the center of the stage and put his hand on his heart." He added, "The house would be screaming, and then he would put his other arm up. Once, an actor standing backstage asked him, 'What is that you're doing at the curtain call?' and Olivier said, 'I'll tell you one thing, you'll never do it,' which was cutting but true." Watching Olivier onstage, Gambon became aware of his vocal techniques—"that clipped delivery, and bringing the line up at the end." He found, he said, that "clipping the words makes the speeches easier to control, and it helps breathing."

Behind Olivier's back, everyone could do an imitation of him, but being in his presence could make an actor tongue-tied. Once, when Gambon was in the basement canteen at the Old Vic having a cup of tea and reading a newspaper, he felt someone staring at him. It was Olivier, on the other side of the table. They were the only people in the canteen. Apparently, Olivier did not remember who he was. Gambon looked nervously around him. On the table was a leather wallet, embossed with the letters "NORG," which Gambon assumed was an abbreviation for "Norway." Impelled to speak, he said, "Norg," as if it were a word in some native dialect.

Olivier looked up and said, "Beg your pardon?"

Gambon repeated, "Norg," and added, "On the wallet—someone must have given you that wallet when you played Hamlet at Elsinore."

After a long pause, Olivier said, "Look, I haven't the faintest idea what you're talking about. That is not my wallet and Elsinore isn't in fucking Norway. It's in Denmark, and good morning to you." Olivier got up and walked away.

YEARS later, Olivier took at least partial credit for discovering Gambon. With pride, he once told me that Gambon had been one of the "old boys" in the original company and had become "an important actor." The truth was that throughout his National apprenticeship Gambon was a very junior member of the company. For a time, he was quite content watching Olivier and carousing with his mates, but as other young actors began playing more substantial roles his ambition rose, and he asked Olivier if he, too, might move up in the ranks. Olivier's response was that it might be time for him to move on. He suggested that Gambon would find greater opportunity in a provincial repertory company. Olivier could have left matters there, but instead he got in touch with the Birmingham Repertory, where, forty years earlier, he had served his own apprenticeship. With Olivier's recommendation, Gambon was accepted. He began to play larger roles almost immediately. "Having been cooped up at the National, I was able to open my lungs," he said. He did Shaw, Ibsen, and Genet, but he was a long way from London and from the acclaim that would later surround him. Then came an event that changed the course of his career—the first time he took advantage of a demanding assignment and was seen by those best able to help him.

It was 1968, and as the climax of the season he played the title role in "Othello." Iago was played by Brian Cox, a Scotsman six years his junior. For months, Cox had been telling Gambon that he was being considered for the leading role in a new BBC adventure series called "The Borderers." Gambon greeted that repeated announcement with a certain detachment; he was playing in rep and had scant interest in anyone's television projects. Then one day Cox informed him that "The Borderers" people would be at that evening's performance. Accompanying them was Cox's agent, Larry Dalzell.

"Iago opens the play, and after two or three minutes I thought, He's won-

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derful, he'll get the role," Dalzell recalls. "I had no idea who the actor was who was playing Othello. I had never heard of him, but when he came onstage it was like something one reads in Hazlitt and James Agate. I had experienced it only twice in my life—when I was quite young and saw Laurence Olivier play Richard III, and now. There were shivers at the base of my neck. I had the feeling I was seeing something very dangerous. When Gambon came on as Othello, it was like watching a smoking volcano that was going to erupt. It was one of the most extraordinary performances I had ever seen in my life."

To Dalzell's abashment, the men from the BBC agreed with him. On the spot, they decided to reject his client, Cox, and sign the other actor, Gambon, to play the lead in "The Borderers." Embarrassingly, the actors shared a dressing room. After the performance, there was a knock on the door. A man introduced himself as Peter Graham-Scott, the producer of "The Borderers."

"Brian's here," Gambon said.

"I don't want to speak to him," Graham-Scott said. "Would you come out in the corridor for a moment?"

Ambition overcoming guilt, Gambon accepted the offer of the role and then had to go back inside to confront Cox. "Sorry, mate," he said. As for Dalzell, he did two things: he expressed his regrets to Cox, and he introduced himself to Gambon and said he wanted to represent him. He has done so ever since. (Cox made his own climb to success, playing "Titus Andronicus" at Stratford-Upon-Avon and "King Lear" at the National Theatre.) After the Birmingham experience, Dalzell went back to London and told friends that he had just seen "the star classic actor of tomorrow." Naturally, no one believed him. It was twelve years before others echoed Dalzell's judgment—twelve years before Gambon played Galileo.

After finishing the season in Birmingham, Gambon swung into "The Borderers." In preparation for that series, he learned to ride a horse, and he changed his billing from Mike Gambon to the more formal Michael Gambon. "The Borderers" became a popular series, and went into a second season. Gambon, refusing to be typecast as a swashbuckler, stepped back into rep to play "Coriolanus" and "Macbeth" (and the curse of the Scottish play held: his father died on opening night). In 1970, he began a season of minor roles in Shakespeare and Shaw for the Royal Shakespeare Company, and then played a Member of Parliament in a second television series, "The Challengers," with Colin Blakely. Another actor in the series, Eric Thompson (the father of the actress Emma Thompson, who later married Kenneth Branagh), was moving into directing. Casting "The Norman Conquests," a new Alan Ayckbourn trilogy, he enlisted Gambon to play the role of Tom, the veterinarian.

The principal subject of the three overlapping plays is attempted infidelity among several suburban couples. Off center is Tom—shy, well intentioned, ineffectual. The selection of Gambon to play the role was curious. Thompson and Ayckbourn knew him only from television. In "The Borderers," Ayckbourn says, he was a "sort of Charlton Heston, the man on the horse in a British Western," and, "with his long hair, he looked a bit like the lead singer with Pink Floyd"—not exactly anyone's image of Tom the vet. Gambon joined a cast of accomplished comic players, including Penelope Keith, Felicity Kendal, Penelope Wilton, and, in the title role, Tom Courtenay. He found himself one among equals. In one scene, a moment of physical comedy that made the greatest public impression, Gambon had to come into a dining room and sit in a chair with short legs. It was like a child's chair at a grownups' table. The biggest man at the table found himself looking up at the others and at the food itself. It was a hysterically funny sight gag.

Analyzing what made that scene so amusing, Ayckbourn says, "It was the way Michael sat in that low chair. He was trying not to make anyone uneasy in his behalf. But he looked terribly uncomfortable. The great essence of his comedy is that there wasn't a trace of anything ludicrous about what he did. He doesn't have tricks. He said, 'I can only play it one way—true, straight down the middle,' and that's exactly the best comic acting."

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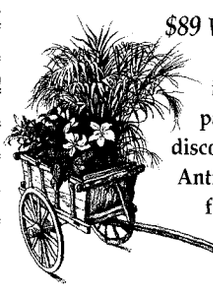

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Gambon recalls. "One night, I was sitting on the short chair facing the audience, with my arms up, eating a salad." He raised his long arms high to demonstrate the distance from the table —a maneuver that by itself would make anyone laugh. "I saw a man fall out of his seat and roll down the gangway. The laughter was frightening. The house shook. The six of us onstage stopped acting. We waited on the edge, and it was an extraordinary moment." Then the actors started to laugh—"corpsed," in theatre idiom, by a member of the audience. Remembering the moment, Gambon laughed so hard that tears came to his eyes. Tom the vet remains a role with which he feels a particular affinity, as a man who "walks through life and daydreams," the big bloke, last at table, with no option but to sit in the low chair.

After "The Norman Conquests," he took another unlikely sidestep—this time into a play by Simon Gray, succeeding Alan Bates in "Otherwise Engaged." Gambon was an unusual choice to play the character of Simon Hench, a publisher coolly removed from life, a man who prefers to sit back and listen to a record of "Parsifal" rather than involve himself in the problems of his friends. Gray and his director, Harold Pinter, had seen Gambon in the Ayckbourn trilogy and had felt, in Pinter's words, that "he was a hell of an actor," and they had also been captivated by his use of his hands, by his "elegant gestures," which seemed perfectly suited to the character in "Otherwise Engaged."

Just as Gaskill led to Olivier, Pinter led to Peter Hall, who brought Gambon back to the National as a leading actor, performing in plays by Ayckbourn ("Sisterly Feelings"), Gray ("Close of Play"), Pinter, and, finally, Brecht. "I owe almost everything to the National and to Peter Hall," Gambon has said. "I shall not forget the day he said, 'I want you to play Galileo.' I had never played a part of classical stature in London."

Readily accepting the role, though he had never seen or read the play, Gambon found himself working with the director John Dexter, whom he remembered from his earlier days at the National. Dexter had directed Olivier's "Othello," in which Gambon had a walk-on and had been frightened by Dexter's reputation as a martinet. Despite the disparity in their theatrical experience, the two formed a healthy working alliance for "Galileo," perhaps partly because both of them were working-class outsiders among the élite of English theatre. (Dexter is the son of a plumber.)

In preparation, Gambon read the play again and again. He did not undertake research into Galileo's life or Brechtian theatre, nor did he attempt to draw a psychological profile of the character. Unquestionably he was helped by his own Galilean interest in the nature of mechanical things. Dexter became his guide in varying his performance and making it interesting. "John said if you had a long speech, you couldn't just do it blah, blah, blah, you have to do the middle bit fast and then the end high," Gambon told me. "You gradate it, do machinations with it, give it a bit of fireworks, and then take it down. Do Marlon Brando for half a minute, then maybe a bit of Robert Newton. You use your eyes, change the rhythms, and disobey the full stops and commas. Playing Galileo was not as crude as that, but if you're acting a big part the computer up here is going." He pointed to his head.

Gambon wanted to make one thing particularly clear about acting: "It's not a thought process," he said. "It lives in you. It's intuition." For him, acting is an invisible technique. Through all his permutations, the focus is on "finding the way the person is." From within himself he discovered Galileo. "In Brecht's version, he is just a worker for what he saw as the truth —and as scientific knowledge," he said. "But at the same time he warns against how clever we will become. He says that one day we will kill ourselves, which looks like it's coming true."

Impressed by Gambon's Galileo, Adrian Noble offered him the opportunity to play both King Lear and Mark Antony for the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford. With only the slightest hesitation, Gambon accepted. As he said, Lear, like Galileo, is "one of the greatest parts ever written, and if you shied away from that, why be an actor?" In Noble's provocative concept, Lear shared equal billing with his Fool (Antony Sher), circumstances

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that bothered some critics and would have disturbed most actors playing Lear. But Gambon, with his customary generosity, was a party to the growth of the Fool. "It wasn't just Tony's Fool, it was Michael's Fool as well," Noble says. "He created a man whose madness was always there. You had to be mad to have a Fool like that." In rehearsals, Noble said, they concentrated on the "burst of creativity" that results from Lear's dividing his kingdom. It is a "destructive" creativity, he said. "He breaks himself apart. He goes mad. But it is also creative in that such extraordinary linguistic and physical energy is released in Lear." This was a far more physical Lear than one is accustomed to, though Gambon did not shortchange the king's howl of despair. Performed in rep, "King Lear" and "Antony and Cleopatra" were a double tour de force for Gambon, especially on those days when "Lear" was done at the matinée and "Antony" in the evening. After playing an eighty-year-old Lear, Gambon said, it was "like a holiday" to play a forty-year-old Antony, opposite Helen Mirren.

This new world conquered, Gambon turned around and went back to the National. There he acted in Christopher Hampton's "Tales from Hollywood" and, as the flamboyant Welsh director, in Ayckbourn's backstage comedy "A Chorus of Disapproval." Under the aegis of Peter Hall, Ayckbourn was starting a company within the National and was planning a repertory of three plays, and he wanted Gambon as his leading actor. The two had lunch to discuss the possible choices of plays. Ayckbourn said he was thinking of doing the farce "Tons of Money."

"I was in it," Gambon said, mentioning a platform performance of the play at the National. "What do you want me to play?"

"Sprules, the butler," Ayckbourn said.

"Oh, great," Gambon said. "That's the part I did before. I don't have to learn the lines. What's the second one?"

" 'A View from the Bridge.' Arthur Miller."

"Oh, great," Gambon said.

"We hadn't even had the soup," Ayckbourn recalls. "So I said, 'Well, my new play isn't written, but I promise you a nice part.' He said, 'That's great,' and we went on talking about something else." Ayckbourn laughed as he recalled the next step: Gambon "walking around the National saying, 'Anybody got a copy of "A View from the Bridge"? We might be doing it. Good part, is it?' "

Gambon's quick acceptance without any knowledge of the text was, of course, conditioned by his trust in Ayckbourn and by his innate faith in his own flexibility. The role of Sprules, a cameo, was simple—or, at least, it seemed simple—but with Gambon in the part the butler outshone all the larger characters in the comedy. The Gambon character in the new Ayckbourn, "A Small Family Business," changed drastically in the course of the play—from a devoted family man into a criminal. He was, Ayckbourn says, "a clean-slate character," meaning that the actor had to color in the outline. In "A View from the Bridge," Gambon was faced with many problems, including that of playing an American. "It's easier to step into the shoes of a king in Shakespeare than to play someone who really lives and breathes and is modern," he said. "It is the only contemporary tragedy I've done, and it was very, very difficult."

Looking back on the rehearsal process, Ayckbourn says, "Working with him is like having some wonderful, limitless machine, like a Lamborghini, at your disposal as director and writer" —a description reminiscent of what Gambon said about Olivier. For an illustration, Ayckbourn pointed to a scene in "A View from the Bridge" in which Eddie Carbone realizes he is losing his niece to the illegal immigrant Rodolpho, and starts to cry. "Michael did what I suppose inductively anyone does in England," Ayckbourn said. "He turned upstage and wept. I said to him, 'It would be great if you cried straight out at us,' and he said, 'Yeah, that's right.' The next time, he just cried, head up, straight out. Bang! It was extraordinary and showed terrific courage. Anyone else would have said, 'I'll work on it.' He just did it."

Then Ayckbourn described a scene in which Marco, Rodolpho's brother, is coming for Eddie, and Eddie "is pacing up and down like a trapped animal." He recalled, "I said, 'Mike, we need to clear this set back to the wall

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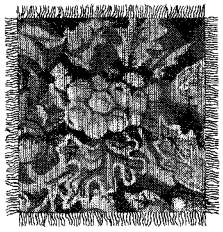
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because I have to have space for the final knife fight.' He said, 'You want me to do the scene change?' I said yes. He picked up the table at the center and ran at the women. It was absolutely terrifying. The man was breaking up his home—and what he was doing was moving the scenery. I said, 'That's the best scene change I've ever seen.' That seems to me the work of the complete actor. All sorts of other actors would say, 'You can't expect me to do a scene change in the middle of my big scene.' But he incorporated it. He was technically able to do that and clever enough to make it part of the play and make it work for him." The size of that performance awed even Ayckbourn. "This sort of massive eruption happened as a result of all the fuses one had helped to light in rehearsal," he said. "This huge performance was really quite daunting to be near."

Although Gambon occasionally appeared in films (he was a zookeeper in "Turtle Diary," for example) and television series, his best work was onstage —until "The Singing Detective." As a nonreader, he was overwhelmed by the length of the script. "It was a massive great chunk, which I had a job getting through," he said. "It was complicated stuff. But I read it, and I had to play it. I thought it was a masterpiece."

As rehearsals began, Gambon and Dennis Potter met briefly. The actor watched the author, who was watching the actor watching him. Each thought he was being unobtrusive. Potter suffers from the same debilitating skin condition as his character, and Gambon studied his gestures and mannerisms—how he held a cigarette and a cup of coffee. By double-jointing his thumb, he imitated the action. The role called for Gambon to be immobilized much of the time in a hospital bed. For such a highly physical actor, that might seem to impose restraint. The opposite turned out to be true. He was forced to use other resources. "His face was a battlefield in that bed," Potter says. "He used his eyes in the most amazing fashion." From behind his ravaged mask of a face, his eyes and his voice spoke with authority as a man afflicted but who is carrying on with a clownish spirit. "It was a bloody tiring role to do," Gambon said. "By the end of a day's shooting, I was dead."

Potter observes, "When he was in maximum makeup, with all the sores and lesions on his face, he wouldn't eat with the rest of the cast and crew in the hospital dining room. It was as though he actually had the disease and didn't like being seen like that."

Potter credits Gambon with a lack of self-consciousness in performance, in contrast to other English actors. "They seem as if they were a micro-millimetre away from themselves, looking at themselves," he said. "He's a very unactory actor. He's also a very shy man. You wouldn't be surprised to encounter him in a Dickens novel, wearing patent-leather shoes and sitting on a high stool, and yet doing amazing things when he locks the office door. There's something of that in him that comes out in his acting." With "The Singing Detective," as with "Galileo," Gambon exceeded all expectations, proving at last that his presence could be as compelling on the screen as it is on the stage.

BY 1990, Gambon was one of England's major stars—a ranking certified by the fact that when he appeared in a play in the West End he was able to command, in addition to his salary, a percentage of the box-office gross. He began the year by doing Ayckbourn's "Man of the Moment," a comedy about a decent man subjected to manipulation by the media. Gambon played Douglas Beechey, a mild-mannered bank clerk who rose to an act of heroism by disarming a thief during a robbery. The robber, Vic Parks, served a prison sentence, but on his release became a famous author and a television celebrity, while the heroic bank clerk faded into obscurity. After seventeen years, the two have been brought together for a television reunion. Gambon could have played either role but chose Douglas. He was marvellous as the character, playing him with a sweet sincerity that made one think of Chaplin, or of Alec Guinness in his early movies. Arriving at Vic's Mediterranean villa, Douglas is wearing a heavy sweater and an ill-fitting tweed

jacket, just as he would in the London suburb of Purley, where he lives. The clothes are emblematic of a man who would not know how to change his spots. Douglas is what he is, no matter where he is. Through Gambon's artistry, a character who was almost too gullible to be true became real—and, eventually, touching.

For his role in "Man of the Moment," Gambon won an Olivier Award as best actor in a comedy. It was the latest in a series of award-winning performances, but Gambon was still not a household name. As I left the theatre after seeing the play, I heard a woman say, "I just loved the man who played Douglas Beechey." Even after "The Singing Detective" and so many stage successes, Gambon retains his anonymity, mostly as the result of his own determination. He is diligent about keeping himself out of the public spotlight. Little of consequence has been written about him, and his private life has remained his own business. Even close friends have never visited him at his home, in London.

The day after I saw "Man of the Moment," I met Gambon for the first time, in Larry Dalzell's office, near Covent Garden. Gambon was wearing his barrister's suit, or, one might say, his barrister's costume: a well-cut double-breasted blue suit with a red tie and white socks. To top off the English image, he carried an umbrella, as if rain were imminent. Walking briskly to lunch at a nearby restaurant, he looked dignified, as if he were on the way to his club or his brokerage house. (Several weeks later, when we met for lunch at an elegant restaurant near New Bond Street, he was tieless and wearing a smocklike overshirt and work trousers. Looking around the room at the expensively attired businessmen, he said, "I'm the only man here today wearing a lavatory cleaner's jacket.") At the restaurant, he studied the menu and ordered celery soup and trout, explaining that he was an endomorph and it was a "good diet at lunch." Despite his reputation for reserve, he proved to be an expansive talker and anecdotalist. This conversation and others were filled with long stories about the actor's life and with the peal of his laughter at remembered moments of tomfoolery. He was unfailingly polite in his responses—so much so as to seem guileless. Like his character in the play, he was eager to please

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and equally eager not to offend. One area remained touchy—his marriage and his family. For the record, he has been married for many years to a mathematician, and they have a twenty-seven-year-old son, who is studying to be a surveyor. Gambon has a younger brother and sister, who, like their mother, live in Crayford. Whenever the subject turned to family matters, Gambon became a master of equivocation.

The only other difficult subject for Gambon was acting, though he did try to be revealing about it. "Quite simply, I read the play a lot," he told me. "I have to find out what the man looks like, and what he's wearing, and then everything else seems to fit into place. I'm not saying it's not work, but I don't overcomplicate things, and I don't do research." He also doesn't go through the American-style process of analyzing behavior. "I've always thought that everything is in the words the character says," he told me. "I just say what the author wrote and put my own thing on top of it."

But what is his own thing? How does he Gambonize a role? He is unable to say. In pursuit of an answer, we spoke, then and later, about his preparation for his next role, "Othello," at Scarborough. "I'm totally obsessed with what Othello looks like," Gambon said. "Should he have a shaved head? Or should he wear a ponytail?" Principally, he was worried about playing a black man, and whether or not doing so would even be acceptable onstage today. As he talked about hairstyle, color of makeup, and other details, he made it clear that these questions, seemingly trivial, were essential to his concept. He planned to have boots and sandals made by a bootmaker, and he was meeting with a friend who was a makeup artist for the BBC. He wanted to have contact lenses made that would change the color of his eyes. Much of his worry arose because he would be in Scarborough, four hours from London. It would be isolated there, and he wanted to have all the necessities with him.

"I think a lot of acting problems are physical problems," Gambon said. "Sometimes the reason a scene doesn't work between two actors is that they're in the wrong position. Geography of the stage is very important. I once understudied in a play that Dame Edith Evans was in. Her main preoccupation in the rehearsal room and all through

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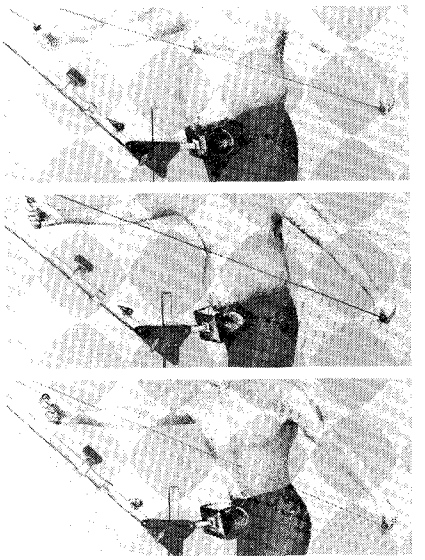

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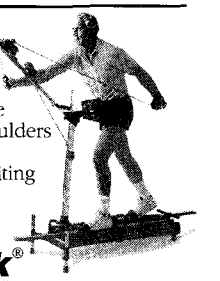

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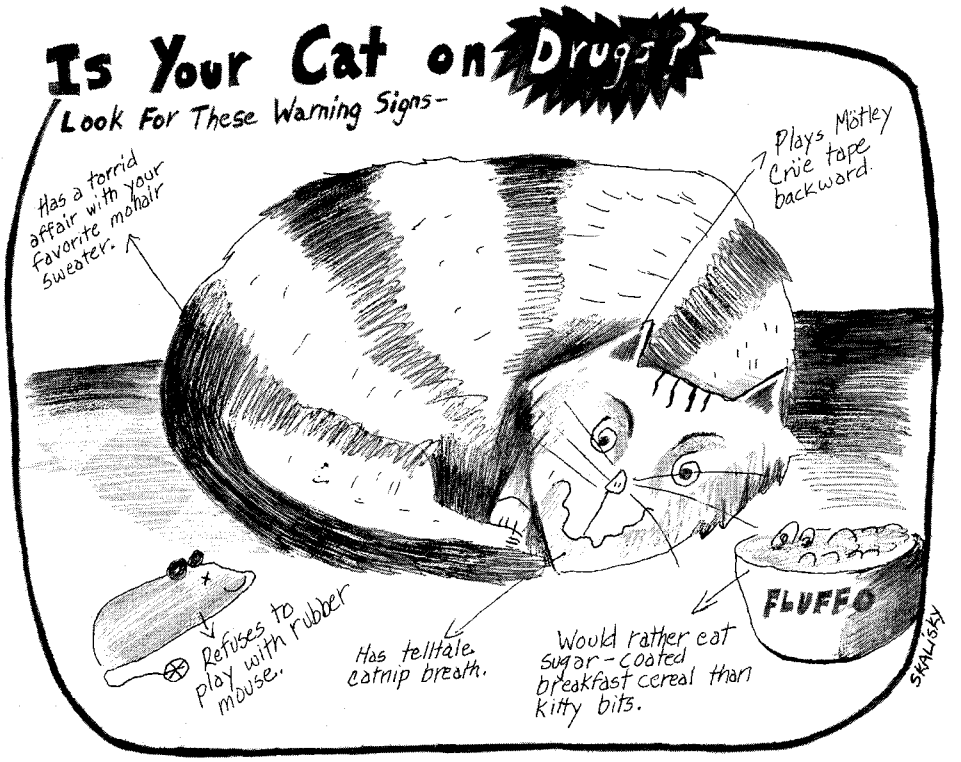
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the production was how close or how far away she was from the other actors. Richardson was a bit like that as well. He had this thing about the Laban theory of movement. He thought that you have a bubble around you, the same height as your head and the same width as your arms can stretch. And if anyone comes too near it's like breaking into your space. It's like people who stand too close to you when they're talking to you. One day during rehearsals of 'Lear,' Adrian Noble said I had good spatial awareness. I had complained about the scene in which Lear banishes Cordelia. I said the daughters were too close to me, and I couldn't explain why, but he took my point."

When Gambon arrives for rehearsal, he is unencumbered by the excess baggage of memories drawn from life. Instead, he has a sense of selective recall. Ideas and images "cook inside" him. Describing Gambon's process, John Dexter once said, "Until he has solved all the practical problems—how to move, how to speak, whether to turn on the right foot or the left—that volcano of poetry can't erupt." Gambon's characterizations evolve slowly. Later, I learned from Ayckbourn just how slowly.

Ayckbourn said that the first reading of "A Chorus of Disapproval" was "the worst I've ever had of a play of mine," and added, "Michael reversed or inverted every line and read in a sort of Irish-Indian accent, which was the nearest he got to Welsh at that point. I don't think many of the actors had ever worked with him before. They were all sitting around really excited to be working with the Great Gambon, and this man was massacring the play." When Gambon finally worked his way into the role, it was, of course, a bravura comic performance.

That is why Ayckbourn is undiscouraged by apparent foundering in the early stages of a production. "He carries the script perilously late in rehearsal, because he can't let it go until he is sure not just of the lines but of his own feelings," Ayckbourn said. "Just before 'Man of the Moment' opened in the West End, the published version of the play came out, and I signed a copy and gave it to him. At the first preview, I noticed he had the book in his pocket onstage." When Ayckbourn questioned the advisability of carrying the play in performance, Gambon said, speaking as the character, "I bought it at the airport. I wanted to read it."

When I asked Gambon how many of his performances were self-directed, he said, "Quite a few. I usually find my own way through things." He admitted that he felt an uneasiness with many directors, with the definite exception of Ayckbourn and Pinter.

The conversation shifted to his two American favorites, Marlon Brando and Robert De Niro. In 1988, he had accepted a small role in the film "A Dry White Season" only because doing so would enable him to work with Brando. In the film, Brando played a liberal South African lawyer, and Gambon was a judge. When Gambon's agent told him of the offer, he said, "Tell them I'll do it for nothing"—for the chance to act with Brando. When I asked him if he really would have done it without pay, he laughed, and said, "Of course not." But the salary was not the point. In the course of the filming, he learned that Brando "wasn't at all concerned with Method acting," and explained, "On the first day, he said, 'I want a surgical boot with a big platform sole that lifts my foot three inches off the ground.'" Gambon mimicked Brando's voice and manner, clumping his foot on the floor. "And then he said, 'I want a walking stick.' He got the boot, the walking stick, and a little pair of glasses. He's just as concerned with his looks as Laurence Olivier was. He's perfection—when you see him in a film studio with a camera on him, the way he is able to relax."

Although Gambon considers himself lazy, he might better accuse himself of hyperactivity. While he was filming "A Dry White Season" during the daytime, he was doubling in two plays onstage. At 6:15 P.M., he played a dictatorial sergeant in Pinter's short play "Mountain Language," at the National, and immediately after that performance he drove across Waterloo Bridge to play the title role in "Uncle Vanya," in a West End production co-starring Jonathan Pryce.

Gambon has seen all of De Niro's films. One of his favorites is "Raging Bull," and when he speaks about De Niro he sounds like Peter Hall talking about Gambon. "There is not one frame in the whole film where he wants you to feel sorry for him," he said. "That was the most remarkable achievement. A lot of actors twist and turn plays to make their characters loved. They don't like to be disliked by the audience." He added that the fact that he knows virtually nothing about De Niro personally enhanced his appreciation of De Niro's work. "If they

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know nothing about you, then the canvas can become easier to paint on," he said.

After our first meeting, we spoke almost daily over a period of weeks—by phone, if not in person. During that time, I accompanied Gambon as he went through many of his daily activities. A frequent setting for our talks was his sleek BMW, which he drove with almost alarming ease through the thickest of London traffic. One afternoon between a matinée and an evening performance, we sat in his car waiting for the parking regulations to change, so that he would not be in danger of having his tire clamped by the police. I suggested that this parking routine was demeaning for a star of his stature. Would Lord Olivier have been sitting at the wheel of his car between performances? I told Gambon he should have demanded that a space be reserved for him in the alley behind the theatre. He laughed at the idea of such primadonna privileges, but one could sense that he was tempted by the possibility. A parking space would be high on his list of perks.

I asked him if he had ever played Iago.

He said no. "Iago seems to me to be quite ethereal, a sort of Mercutio type, like a bee, bzzzz, all over the place. I'm not terribly happy doing that sort of thing. I rather like heavier parts. Someone asked Ralph Richardson about Iago, and he said, 'Oh, he's a man who just got on the wrong bus.' " In anticipation of his own forthcoming Othello, Gambon suggested that the two characters be played as "the closest buddies, with a physical closeness that would make the jealousy scenes more believable."

In contrast to other actors, Gambon has no desire to direct or to run a company. He wants to continue being an actor without becoming a manager. At the same time, he refuses to take complete control of his career; he prefers to let things happen. While other actors carefully weigh options and allow long pauses before deciding to chance a role, he moves from play to play, and never stops working. "I heard Natasha Richardson talking on the radio about acting," he told me. "She said she doesn't want to keep churning it out, because it goes stale. That worried me, because that's what I do—I just keep churning, churning, churning. Then I thought, She's wrong, because if it's your job that's what you do. I've never planned anything." He had one qualification: "I'd like to do less theatre. My agent tells me I've been offered all sorts of parts in movies, and I haven't been able to do them because of the theatre work. I'd like to make myself more available. But I feel more at home onstage. It's my country." He added, "It's hard slog and heartache and misery—for moments of sheer joy."

Next to acting, Gambon's primary passion is antique guns: he buys, restores, and collects them. He loves guns as objects of engineering and design, not as arms to fire. "I have no interest in modern, mass-produced guns," he said. "I think they're horrible things. With me, it's the craftsmanship, the form, the line." He never hunts. Nor does he even fire the guns he works on, although when he has finished them they are in working order. He learned about guns as he learned about acting—by teaching himself. He has perfected the art of etching, and engraves beautiful designs on the guns. Seeing his work, one could imagine him as a graphic artist. In both his artistic pursuits, one finds an attention to detail and a desire to keep his modern touches within the framework of the classic original. His interest in guns is allied with a broader interest in engineering—in cars, in planes, in how things work. One of the men he most respects is George Stephenson, the nineteenth-century British engineer who "invented the steam locomotive as we know it today," he said. "Stephenson started as a miner. He couldn't read or write until his early twenties and yet went on to become a great engineer and inventor." At one point, Gambon was going to play Stephenson in a film, but the project fell through.

Gambon is concerned that mechanical engineering is itself a lost art. A few months earlier, he told me, he had gone to a factory to have some steel plates cut for his engraving and had been given a tour of the plant. He was depressed to see that tasks he and his mates had performed by hand years ago were now done by computer. Gambon is a firm believer in the necessity of man's being able to control his environment and to repair the instruments in his daily life. He wears an old-fashioned, non-digital watch. With a certain childlike pride, he said, "You take

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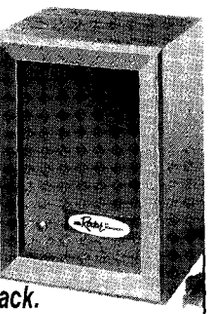

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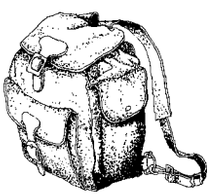

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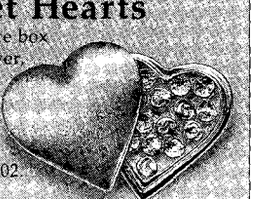

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the back off it and you see the mechanism." He can repair cars as well as watches, and he mourns the fact that in ten years' time "cars will be so technologically advanced that it won't be possible to repair your own car." He went on, "They're wiping us away. The English gun is the last bastion of craftsmanship. Holland & Holland make English sporting guns by hand. They charge twenty-five thousand pounds for one, and there's a two-and-a-half-year waiting list." One can buy a similar, mass-produced gun for two hundred pounds, he said, "but it won't last five generations or appreciate in value."

One rainy afternoon, we drove to visit a gunsmith friend of Gambon's in a London suburb. In the gunsmith's basement workshop, Gambon removed a pistol from his briefcase and a rifle from a large package. The pistol had a carved silver-inlay handle. Inspecting the intricate craftsmanship, the gunsmith expressed his admiration. Gambon was as pleased as if he had just received a rave review for a performance.

Back in the car, I suggested that there might be a parallel between his gun restoration and the theatre.

"But with your restoration there are rules and techniques," I said. "In acting, rules are nebulous."

"There aren't any rules in acting," he said. "It's subjective," and, he added, a performance can change from night to night. "But what I think is different is often the same to the audience—little things that take on mammoth proportions in your mind."

I asked Gambon about his voice, which is deep and resonant.

He said that he thought it came naturally. "From sternum to spine, my chest is as deep as it is wide," he said. "It's shaped like a barrel. It's dead round. It's better for classical acting to be shaped like that."

When I remarked that Gielgud and McKellen were not barrel-chested, he said, with a laugh, "Fucks that theory." Then he offered a substitute explanation: "I think being a smoker helps. Olivier smoked quite heavily, and Gielgud always had a cigarette in his mouth. Alan Howard is a chimney. Ron Pickup *is* a cigarette."

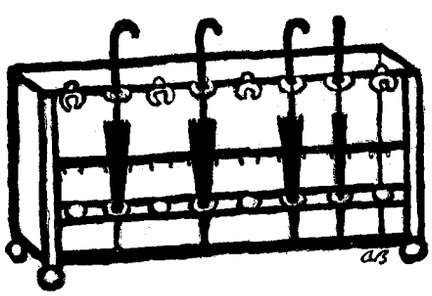
The Gambon voice is an asset not only in Shakespeare but also in doing voice-overs for commercials—one of the ways he has been able to make a steady income as an actor. For several years, he has advertised the wonders of Wisk, the liquid detergent. "I'm the washing machine," he said. "I have lights on the front of my panel, and I light up. I speak normally, and they put it through a distorting mechanism. But people recognize me. My mother knows it's me." He laughed. "She is more impressed by that than she is about my going to see the Queen"—or by his acting. I asked him how he played a washing machine, and he said, "I just do it like myself."

DURING a bout with laryngitis, Gambon invited me to visit him at his home. Considering his reclusiveness, I felt that this was a considerable honor. He lives deep in suburban South London, in an old, rambling house set far back on an ill-tended lawn. Even from the outside, the house looked lived in. One could imagine an Ayckbourn comedy taking place there; actually, the setting was not so far removed in spirit from Purley, where Ayckbourn's Douglas Beechey lives. Gambon led me through a cluttered living room and dining room into the kitchen, where we sat at a long table and had tea. His cat, Winnie, was a frequent visitor. Dvořák's Fourth Symphony was playing on the radio.

I told Gambon that I had recently spoken to Pinter about him.

He was curious about Pinter's response. "He's really a great bloke," he said. "I like Harold, because he doesn't say too much in his plays. They're not overwritten. They're sparse. There's the line and there's a vast subtext. I think he's like that as a man. He doesn't say things he doesn't mean."

Responding to Ayckbourn's statement that he was slow to get into a role, Gambon said, "I get nervous, and so it takes weeks. Some roles are easier than others. I couldn't get into 'Man of the Moment.' I couldn't even learn the lines, because I felt I wasn't right for the role. I'm too big. I bruised my vocal cords, because I tried to make him lighter." Raising his voice to a higher, almost piping level, he demonstrated the difficulty. "And I'm trying to stand like this and make his body small. I can't do it, so I do my own thing. I'm happier when I'm like this." He sat up straight and looked larger and heavier. "And when I speak lines like this." He lowered his voice to his customary baritone. "Having an image of a really thin man in my mind got in my way, and I wasted a lot of time in rehearsal. But I think that's quite legitimate."



Looking ahead to "Othello," Gambon said that rehearsals for that would also be slow. He was seeking help wherever he could find it. Recently, visiting a friend in the hospital, he saw some Arabs saying prayers with worry beads. Imitating the Arabs, he made a low, throaty noise, and said, "There was a lot of this in their speech." He said he had also looked at some photographs of Moors, trying to decide if he should make up his face black or brown. Olivier's Othello was a black African, he said, adding that people had suggested that, with his accent, Olivier had seemed as if he were a West Indian conductor on a London bus. Gambon said Olivier was aware of that criticism and had joked about it. "He would stand in the wings before going on and say, 'No standin' on the top deck.' But, my God, he looked magnificent, which is half the battle. You've got to look right."

More about Olivier: "Thank God he came back from Hollywood, because he changed the English theatre. It gave us a new lift. He did 'Richard III' and then 'The Entertainer' and then 'Othello,' and each was a great, mammoth push. Each one pushed the boundary out, and all the followers came behind him, all the copycats. Olivier and Brando are the two principal twentieth-century actors, Brando in film and Olivier in theatre. They're the most powerful influences. The modern acting side of me feels more attracted to Brando, but the legitimate side is more attracted to Olivier and the career in the theatre. The wild man in films is Brando. It's a good combination."

While acknowledging the visceral image that he projected onstage, Gambon said, "I also like to do the other bit, too—to play the effete. I see myself as being effete." He was not convincing, and both of us laughed at the thought. He said that in playing a role he would go along with any direc-

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torial suggestion. "You never know," he said. "Some door might open. Something might click. It's no skin off my nose. Why not do everything?" About the difference between playing comedy and tragedy he said that comedy was more difficult, at least partly because one had to get laughs. On the other hand, "If you don't get tears, you don't know it—you can't hear the tears."

After we finished our tea, Gambon took me on a tour of his house, beginning with a small machine shop, adjacent to the kitchen. He said that in a building down the street he had a larger workshop, with heavier equipment. This one seemed more than adequate. It was jammed with guns and tools, including a Victorian lathe, which was one of his treasures. He showed me various guns he was working on, including a pair of seventeenth-century pistols. "I have boxes of old guns. I get them at Sotheby's or Christie's." He took out another pistol. "This is a John Manton gold-inlay duelling pistol. He was one of the great makers of English firearms." On the wall was a photograph, taken in 1898, of men working in the Holland & Holland factory. In one corner of the room was a safe. Gambon said that it was filled with pistols.

With a flourish, he held up a photograph of his prize—a replica he had made of an eighteenth-century gun. The notion that a new Gambon could be accepted as an antique seemed to fill him with pride. He said that finishing it had taken him nine hundred hours, which is, of course, more time than he spends rehearsing a play.

Leaving the workroom, we walked through the hallway, which was lined with posters from shows in which he had appeared. In the living room were some of his acting trophies (two Olivier Awards, an Evening Standard Drama Award, one from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts for "The Singing Detective"). Side by side on a table were photographs of his mother and father, looking like portraits in a Victorian album. In cabinets and corners were other collections of his—clocks (a grandfather clock stood nearby), microscopes, and antiquarian-gun books, the only books in evidence.

THOUGH Gambon was always affable in our meetings, he confessed to having a wicked temper. Over supper one evening at Joe Allen, in London, he told me about a disagreement he had had with the producer Duncan Weldon. The producer had offered him what he thought was too low a salary to be in a revival of Pinter's "Old Times," at the Haymarket Theatre. When Gambon complained, Weldon said it was the same salary he was currently paying Rex Harrison, in the play preceding "Old Times." Unable to move the producer to a more generous position, Gambon marched over to the Haymarket and went backstage to see Harrison, whom he had never met. He introduced himself and said he was doing a play for Weldon. "That cheap bastard," Harrison said, in Gambon's dead-on imitation of his voice. "Is he giving you trouble?" Gambon told him the suggested salary, and Harrison confirmed that it was in fact what he was receiving, but that in addition he had been given a suite at the Dorchester Hotel, a chauffeur-driven car, and other perks. Gambon said he reported back to Weldon, and the producer fumed but increased his salary. Several years ago, Gambon played Oscar Wilde in a three-part television series for the BBC. The company was finishing shooting on location in Bristol before moving to Oxford. Late in the afternoon, in full Oscar Wilde regalia—"makeup, big black wig, Edwardian clothes, boots, silk cravat, and silver-topped cane"—he returned to his hotel, to discover that his belongings had been removed from his room and the room had been turned over to the next guest. Already angry at weaknesses in the television script, Gambon became furious and decided to leave Bristol immediately and to refuse to go to Oxford. Still dressed as Wilde, he hurried through the streets to the railway station, with the film's production manager chasing after him in his car. Gambon leaped over a barrier in the motorway, bought a first-class ticket to London, and jumped on the train as it was leaving. He immediately went into the buffet car and began to drink. Hours later, at Paddington Station, a drunken Oscar Wilde weaved off the train. The BBC was waiting. The next day, a car picked him up to take him to Oxford to continue shooting.

After the series was finished, he agreed to an interview with a reporter from a provincial newspaper. The reporter was rash enough to ask him if he had found it difficult to play the role of a homosexual. Gambon responded, "No. I used to be one myself, so I found it very easy. But I had to give up being one. It made my eyes water."

"That was cruel of me," he said later. "But that was a stupid question. Why should it be more difficult than playing any other role? Anyway, you don't play a homosexual, do you? People are homosexuals, full stop, and then they behave the way anyone else behaves. It doesn't mean you have to wave your arms around in the air."

Gambon's outrageous sense of humor is often expressed in elaborate practical jokes. Both he and Pinter told me a story that concerned Gambon's flying. He is an amateur pilot, and on Sundays he will sometimes hire a small plane and fly by himself, always the same route, from Beacon Hill to Ipswich. In another life, he said, he would have liked to be an airline pilot. Watching him drive his car, one could imagine him at the controls of a plane, a Walter Mitty rising to meet all emergencies. Some years ago, the actor Terence Rigby was scheduled to go to New York to appear in a Pinter play, and had decided to travel by boat, because he was afraid of flying. Somehow, Gambon persuaded Rigby to fly with him in a Cessna, in order to cure his phobia. "It was a gentle climb up," Gambon said. "I levelled out at two thousand feet. Terry was rigid, but he calmed down a bit." Then, when Rigby seemed to be on the verge of relaxing, Gambon faked a heart attack. Doubling over and clutching his chest in agony—as he recalled the scene for me, he demonstrated how convincing he could be—he gasped for breath. Rigby was panic-stricken. Gambon looked up, smiled, and said, "Just a bit of indigestion," and recovered control of the plane. "Terry was furious," he said. "If I hadn't been flying the plane, he would have hit me. But he calmed down, and we landed in Ipswich and had tea. He finally smiled." And the flight cured his phobia?

"Nooo, I don't think so!" Explaining his impulsive action, Gambon said, "It's like a devil in you that fucks up a play. You take risks. It's just amazing what you can do in the theatre—and people will accept it."

Gambon is widely known in his profession as a cutup and "corpser." In the

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English theatre, corpsing is a childish yet honored maneuver practiced by the most august of actors, including Olivier. During his second hitch at the National, Gambon often packed a water pistol onstage, and so did his friend and fellow-actor Stephen Moore. During a blackout, one would fire at the other, and during a scene change another actor might be doused with a bucket of water. These things happened not only in Ayckbourn's "Sisterly Feelings" but also during Paul Scofield's "Othello." Although Scofield seems to be the most austere of actors, he has his own clownish nature. There is no proof that he ever packed a water pistol, but he has been known to write messages to the other actors on his eyelids. In that "Othello," Gambon, who was playing Roderigo, would die in a different way every night, imitating various famous actors and altering his death line, "O, I am slain." There was an actor in the company named Bill Sleigh, and in one performance a dying Roderigo said, "O, I am Bill Sleigh." The audience did not notice; the actors corpsed.

In "Sisterly Feelings," the plot of the play is determined in typical Ayckbourn fashion, by two tosses of a coin onstage. Gambon and Moore would have none of this Ayckbournian unpredictability. In his workshop, Gambon sawed two coins in half and created a perfect two-headed coin. Only Moore was in on the deception; he tossed the coin in performance, and the two actors played the scene exactly as they wanted. After the run of the play, they sent the two-headed coin to the author.

GAMBON's most controversial performance was in Peter Greenaway's movie "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover." In this modern Jacobean melodrama, Gambon plays a gangster who brutalizes his wife's lover. The film received widely divergent reviews. When I asked him what had provoked him to play such a nasty role, he said he was attracted to the film by its humor. "When I read the script, I found it sidesplittingly funny," he said. "I was amazed when I saw it in a cinema and people sat there silently."

As he talked about the film, one could feel his ebullience overcoming any feelings about the work's taste. "It was wonderful to play such a horrible bastard," he said. "Such grotesque behavior! I smashed the kitchen up. It was like out of a cartoon strip, like a kid being let loose in a playpen." He said this quietly and gently, but as he warmed to the memory he began to laugh.

"Greenaway advertised for five hundred extras in the *Times*," he recalled. "He couldn't pay them, so he said, If you want to be in a new Peter Greenaway film and you have an evening dress or ball gown you're welcome to come to Pinewood Studios. All these people turned up. There was one big eating scene, but they weren't told what I was going to do. We rehearsed before they got onto the set, and then they came in wearing their beautiful dresses and carrying Chihuahuas. They were all excited to be in the film. And then they were totally taken by surprise. I took the tablecloth and whopped it off the table." With sound effects, he imitated crashing bottles, and then he continued to describe the ferocious action.

"It nearly misfired in the lavatory scene. Greenaway had a series of women sitting in the cubicles. He said, 'This man's going to kick each door in and drag you all out,' and he told each one roughly where I'd throw her. But you go over the top, don't you? He said 'Action,' and it wasn't at all like I said I'd do it. I was going in bashing the doors. One door came off the hinges. I got to one cubicle and there was a woman in her seventies who had turned up from an amateur dramatic society. She looked like she thought she was going to be murdered. I grabbed hold of her and I thought, Jesus, how dreadful this is. She went skidding across the floor. I opened the next cubicle and started throwing stuff out—brooms, pails, buckets. I had been told not to throw the last bucket, because it was made of steel. Fucking massive thing. But I couldn't stop myself."

He laughed loudly as he reënacted the scene, and it was impossible not to laugh along with him. "I picked the bucket up." Groaning, he pretended to strain. "I threw it like this." He heaved the imaginary bucket. "It went through the air, and it went straight past the lens of the camera. It could have smashed that fifty-thousand-pound camera. Greenaway said, 'Print!' " Gambon clapped an imaginary clapboard. Having made a terrifying incident seem horribly amusing, he caught his breath.

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I asked him where all that violence came from.

He said, with a broad smile, "It's not violence! It's just fun. It has nothing to do with violence. The character's wife is double-crossing him. So he goes berserk. You'd like to do that. You'd love to break up a kitchen—just for fun."

In one conversation, Gambon told me that he had met Ian McKellen for a drink the night before, adding that he did not think of McKellen as a rival. He said, "It's nice to have people who are going to grow old in this job with you, isn't it?" Perhaps realizing that this sounded as if they were two long-time laborers on a factory assembly line, he said, "I don't know what I mean by that. But I think you have to keep the tradition of theatre alive. I admire Ian. He works in the theatre all the time. He sees it as his life. Well, it is his life." Comparing the two of them, he said, "I think I'm more the cart horse to Ian's racing thoroughbred. I don't mean cart horse in a derogatory way."

When I told him that Peter Hall had said he could imagine him as a strolling player moving from theatre to theatre, he seemed caught up by the idea. Because of the largeness of his talent, Gambon could be considered a throwback to the early eighteen-hundreds and the time of Kean and Macready. It is his favorite theatrical period. "The theatre was a wild place then," he said. "I think actors have got a bit too respectable now."

ONE of Gambon's special talents is "finger walking"—imitations of actors that he does entirely with his fingers, which become the equivalent of hand puppets. Several of his friends had told me about this feat of mimicry, and when I mentioned it in conversation one day he seemed hesitant at first but then demonstrated it for me. Olivier, represented by two long Gambon fingers, marched confidently across the table without breaking his stride, as if all goals had been designated and there were no obstacles in sight. "Olivier went boom, boom, boom," he said.

Next in line was Richardson, also moving straight ahead, but with a slight comical swagger. "They never had setbacks, did they?" he asked. In contrast: "Some actors went boom, boom, boom, and then they'd hit a brick wall and step sideways." Demonstrating, his fingers stumbled. "This was an actress at the National in the sixties." The two fingers strode sexily right off the edge of the table. Before the actress plunged into the abyss, one finger reached up and grabbed the table for dear life. "Just hanging in the air," the puppet-master said, and, with an autocratic flick of the other hand—and a laugh—he brushed the finger off, and the actress fell to her doom. Then came Peter O'Toole, who, along with Albert Finney, was one of the most promising actors of his generation. A stiff-backed Lawrentian walk through the desert was soon replaced by lurching and stumbling. Then he fell on his knuckles but picked himself up and moved ahead again.

Apologizing for his impersonations, Gambon said, "I can really do them only when I've had a few drinks at the Dirty Duck"—the favorite pub of actors at Stratford-Upon-Avon.

I asked Gambon to do a Gambon finger walk.

"Mine's slow and methodical," he said. Two fingers stepped out with determination, though not with the bearing of Olivier. Instead, there was a certain casualness, as if the actor were simply taking a pleasant stroll—but knew exactly where he was headed. As the fingers walked with a loose, natural gait, Gambon delivered a voice-over commentary: "I'm all right." Then, after a pause in which he seemed to contemplate the difficulties of an actor's life, he said, "It's a charmed bloody career that I've had." —MEL GUSSOW

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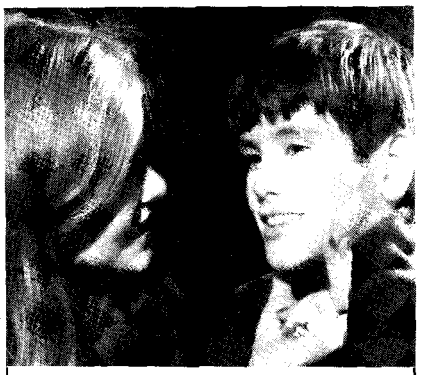
CORRECTION

Some year-end prices from the New York and American stock exchanges and over-the-counter listings in the Business section Wednesday were wrong. The incorrect prices are those that should have ended in 16ths or 32nds, such as 5/16 or 25/32. Here is how to determine the correct numbers: All incorrect listings have the number 4 or 5 in them, such as a listing of 143 or 525. But not all listings that have a 4 or 5 in them are incorrect. To determine an incorrect listing, look at the other prices listed for a particular stock. All of the numbers should be relatively close together. If a stock's high for the year is 1¾ and the low is ¼ but the last price is 47, the 47 is incorrect. To determine the correct number, ignore the appropriate 4, or the 5, that appears as the price. The number, or two numbers in some cases, behind the 4 or 5 is the numerator of the fraction in which the denominator is 16 or 32. Thus, a 47 is 7/16, a 413 is 13/16, a 143 is 13/16. Similarly, a 53 is 3/32, a 159 is 19/32, and a 557 is 57/32.

—*Phoenix (Ariz.) Arizona Republic.*

Questions?



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THE CURRENT CINEMA

Full Stop

GEORGE SLUIZER'S "The Vanishing" has a simple, powerful thriller hook: a beautiful young Dutch woman, Saskia (Johanna Ter Steege), vacationing in the South of France with her boyfriend, Rex (Gene Bervoets), walks into a highway rest stop to buy soda and beer and never comes back. The disappearance-while-on-holiday premise is a familiar one, from pictures like Polanski's "Frantic" and Hitchcock's two versions of "The Man Who Knew Too Much," but "The Vanishing" doesn't feel second-hand. In this movie, the missing (presumably abducted) tourist isn't just a pretext for getting an innocent abroad mixed up in some international intrigue. Rex's search for Saskia, which takes place over several years, produces suspense of an unusually melancholy kind. He can't stand not knowing what happened to her; his ignorance of her fate is like a dark hole that suddenly opened up at his feet, and as he stares into this void its emptiness seems to mesmerize him, to freeze him in place. It's as if his life were suspended at the moment of Saskia's vanishing and couldn't be resumed unless he went back to that point on the highway where the path of their life together abruptly forked, and took her road instead, whatever the consequences. The logic of Rex's investigation—his obsession—is that he has to follow his lover, against all reason, down the deadest of dead ends. Both the hero and the plot he's trapped in have the tortuous, involuted quality of a complex sentence struggling to resolve itself into meaning, to discover its own inevitable form. And the conclusion justifies everything that has led up to it: it shows us, with terrifying clarity, the true shape of this labyrinthine construction. "The Vanishing" comes to a full stop, with a vengeance.

This fiendishly intelligent little movie is adapted from a novel called "The Golden Egg," by the Dutch writer Tim Krabbé; he collaborated with Sluizer on the adaptation, and part of what makes it seem so distinctive is that its form is essentially, even defiantly, literary. It's a sophisticated example of the sort of hermetic intellectual mysteries that Borges is famous for, with their intricate structures of metaphors which always wind up closing in on the detective, entombing him (and the reader) in the rigid symmetry of his own mind. Krabbé shares Borges's taste for metaphysical paradox and his self-conscious obsession with formal shapeliness. Krabbé isn't nearly so bookish, though. Borges, who was blind, made his fictions entirely from the material inside the darkened chamber of his own brain—from the constant rearrangement and reclassification (he was a professional librarian) of the ideas and bits of esoteric lore he had collected there. "The Vanishing" is, in every sense, more down-to-earth: it's a literary trap, but one that catches an ordinary young couple on their way to the sunny Mediterranean, not scholars and ratiocinative geniuses who have set their course, with blinkered certitude, for unattainable realms of enlightenment. The fates of Saskia and Rex are worked out with an almost geometric precision; what makes "The Vanishing" linger in our memories, though, is the disparity between the beautiful abstraction of the plot and the naturalistic specificity of the characters and the settings. This perfect, meticulously ruled pattern seems to have been superimposed on a world that's too concrete, too real and recognizable; the movie gives us the disconcerting feeling of watching people we know through the tight mesh of a prison window.

Sluizer's direction is quiet and unemphatic, and it's brilliantly effective. In the film's opening scenes, Rex and Saskia are driving south through France: they practice their French, she tells him a dream she had, and then the car runs out of gas in the middle of an unlit tunnel on the highway. Rex, callously or thoughtlessly, leaves her in the car in the dark while he goes back for fuel, and when he returns she isn't there. He finds her at the far end of the tunnel; she looks terrified and forlorn, and then her fear turns into anger at him. The tension isn't fully resolved until they arrive at the busy rest stop, where Rex promises never to abandon her again. When the movie's over, we understand the structural and metaphoric importance of this odd beginning (it proves to be, in a sense, the whole story in miniature, and the movie's last shot is an ironic fulfillment of Saskia's dream), but even while we're seeing it, without foreknowledge of its place in the over-all scheme, it has a disturbing resonance. It's hallucinatory yet familiar, because Sluizer appears to be working less from a plan than from sharp observation. Before anything else, he's concerned with evoking the emotional texture of a long drive: the riders'

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radical shifts in mood, from giddy volubility and intimacy to sudden, mute loneliness; the irritability that can flare up unexpectedly when people who know each other too well are in unknown territory and something goes wrong; and the embarrassment they may later feel at what they've revealed of themselves at the moment of crisis. In the fifteen or twenty minutes before Saskia vanishes, Sluizer gives us a fuller portrait of a relationship than most entire movies do. We don't realize until the end how telling even the smallest details of the couple's interaction are, but they register, with immediate force and life-like ambiguity, as we're watching. And when the time comes to reflect on all the movie's strange and random-seeming moments, to fit them into their places in the story's larger scheme, we find that every one of them has stayed in our minds, as tangible and distinct as evidence preserved in clear envelopes. Even the sounds we hear during Rex and Saskia's last few minutes together seem to persist, echoing through the movie: the low and vaguely ominous hum of highway traffic; the ragged, bright noise of vacationers chattering; the excited voices of sportscasters reporting the Tour de France; the laughs and shouts that rip through the air irregularly, unpredictably, like bursts of static on a car radio. Sluizer is alert to stray sensations—to the surfaces of the world and the nuances of human behavior—and this documentary-style attentiveness gives the movie a vivid realism, a convincing sense of life. "The Vanishing" is about ordinary lives interrupted, hijacked out of time, and Sluizer, in his uninsistent way, does justice to the varied beauty of ordinariness; when Saskia disappears, we feel a visceral shock, as if some fundamental principle of nature had been violated. (The vitality and effortless loveliness of Johanna Ter Steege have a lot to do with this feeling, too.)

After Rex realizes that his lover is missing, the movie's narrative style changes: the straight line of the story splits, ramifying into a complex network of side roads that seem always to bring the hero, and us, back to the same point—the place where the course of Rex's life with Saskia rudely stopped. He defines himself by that single terrible event in his past; nothing before or after Saskia's loss seems to matter much. While Rex is spinning his wheels, stuck in his obsession, the movie picks up the story of the man who abducted Saskia, a reserved, upright bourgeois named Raymond Lemorne (Bernard-Pierre Donnadieu). We know that he's somehow responsible for the crime—we saw him stalking his victim at the rest stop—but we don't know exactly what he has done or why. The movie tracks this monster through his everyday life, which is apparently placid and unexceptional (he has a teaching job, a wife, and a couple of kids), so the narrative has to keep circling back into his past in order to account for him. We get flashbacks to his preparations and rehearsals for his crime, and then to moments from his childhood and early married life. What is withheld, almost to the very end, is Lemorne's version of the abduction itself. The movie teases us with the prospect of revelation, toys with our desire to return to the place and time of the awful event. Lemorne, diabolically, is playing a similar game with Rex: he sends the young man anonymous notes that seem to promise the resolution of the mystery, the long-awaited deliverance of closure. The stories, in the end, do converge: the criminal, the investigator, the missing woman, and the audience come together to return, at last, to the scene of the crime, and the circle described by "The Vanishing" is completed. Aesthetically and intellectually, it's perfect, yet its perfection is horrible, unnatural, claustrophobic.

As chilling and perverse as this film is, it's also, surprisingly, moving: its rigor isn't alienating, and its symmetries are evocative rather than merely ingenious. "The Vanishing" is constructed with flawless elegance, but it's far less self-contained than it seems: traces of deep feeling keep escaping from the artifice, like puffs of breath into cold, thin air, and these wispy, ephemeral indications of unself-conscious life haunt us when the movie is over. This picture's impulses, like those of Brian De Palma's best thrillers, are lyrical rather than mechanical. Not many movies in the genre have the sort of suggestiveness "The Vanishing" has: the elusive but unshakable poetry of nightmare. It's a small classic.

—Terrence Rafferty

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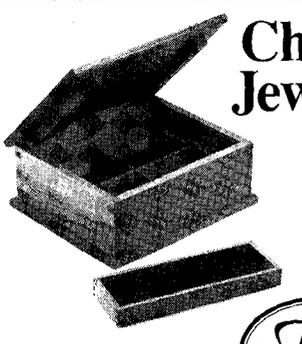

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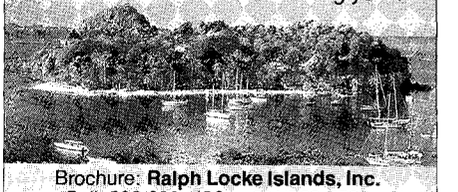

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MUSICAL EVENTS

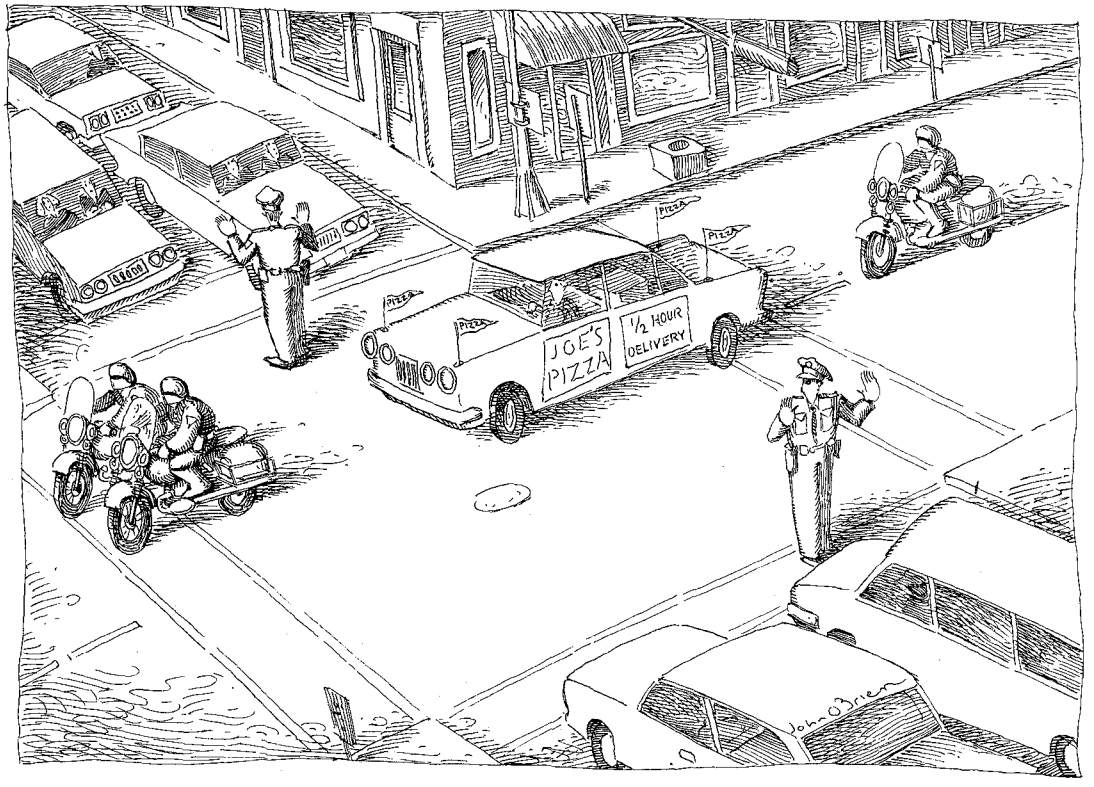
Youth, Beauty, Graceful Action Seldom Fail

Liszt, we now learn, in 1839 drafted not just his two familiar piano concertos but a third concerto as well. Eight years later, at the age of thirty-five, he abandoned his career as a virtuoso pianist, settled in Weimar, and devoted himself to composition and to the support of new music (notably that of his near-contemporaries Wagner and Berlioz). He had his early works fair-copied, scanned them, and revised them as his mastery of form and of orchestration grew. In 1855, with Berlioz conducting, he played his Piano Concerto No. 1, in E-flat, for the first time; two years later, after further revision, it was published. In 1857, with his pupil Hans von Bronsart as the soloist, he conducted his Piano Concerto No. 2, in A; four years later, after further revision, it was published. These two concertos became standard repertory. But the third of the 1839 concertos languished unrevised, unknown until last year, when it had its first performance, in Chicago. It came to New York this month on a Philharmonic bill, conducted by Zubin Mehta, with Jerome Lowenthal as the soloist. This concerto is also in E-flat, and the Weimar copy had been catalogued as rejected material for the familiar concerto in that key. Nine years ago, the scholar Michael Saffle discerned that it was an independent work, "a draft of an otherwise unknown Liszt concerto" in which passages of the solo part are missing. Six years later, Jay Rosenblatt, pursuing a University of Chicago dissertation on Liszt's piano-and-orchestra music, was shown a photostat of a manuscript now in Leningrad: Liszt's 1839 autograph, in which pages of the two E-flat concertos had been shuffled. The gaps of the Weimar copy were explained: Liszt had crossed out some solo passages and instructed his copyist to leave the staves blank; he evidently intended to rewrite them. Beneath the deletions the rejected music was legible, and Mr. Rosenblatt was able to reconstitute the original third concerto of 1839. (Three pages of the autograph were missing; he found one of them in Nuremberg, and for the others the Weimar copy sufficed.)

I have argued on occasion that, provided listeners keep a sense of proportion, it can be more rewarding to revive uneven, ambitious early works by great composers—"Mitridate," "Oberto, Conte di San Bonifacio," "Die Feen," "Rienzi," "Pocahontas"—than smoothly efficient pieces by lesser creators. Liszt in 1839 was not the great composer he became. He had striking ideas about form but hardly knew how to handle them. The Philharmonic program note put the case against the new concerto forcefully:

> Its orchestration is comparatively lackluster and maladroit, its continuity lacks sweep, its solo part rarely rises to the expected Lisztian larger-than-life heroism. One may legitimately wonder whether it was merely by chance that Liszt never returned to the posthumous Concerto, or whether he decided to abandon it—and whether, indeed, a thorough rewriting could have given it the stature of a major work. . . . Liszt may have concluded . . . that the entire piece was fundamentally misconceived.

Maybe he did so conclude. Nevertheless, this is a fascinating composition: a different kind of essay in one-movement form from his two known (also one-movement) concertos, a first stab at the structure he was to command in the Piano Sonata. The concerto begins with a drum figure and a mysterious chromatic answer—first in E-flat and then, without preparation, in C-sharp minor—which introduce musing piano recitatives. A short-breathed, turbulent sequence leads to the first subject, in E-flat minor. Out of the blue, a D-major march (more blatant than the march episode generally deprecated in the A-major concerto) strides forth; it is never resumed. The second subject, in G-flat major, proves to be the theme of Liszt's Opus 1—Variations that he composed in 1824, when he was thirteen. The construction is ambitious but clumsy. Harmonies jump without precedent or logic. Sequences abound (and even the warmest admirers of Liszt's later works regret his frequent reliance on sequence). Liszt's shade may be deploring the exhumation of a juvenile adventure that he chose to forget. (The piece is being widely played.) All the same, the brief concerto—it lasts about thirteen minutes—is, despite its gaucherie, alive



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with excited invention. In a program fair to the composer, there should be representation, too, of the mastery that he later achieved—performances, perhaps, of the other E-flat concerto in both the first and the last of its five surviving versions. That would surely attract an audience. The Chicago première program offered something of the sort in the form of "Totentanz," an excellent piano-and-orchestra work that was drafted at much the same time as the concertos but was extensively revised before its first performance, in 1865. The other concerto in the Philharmonic program was Haydn's in D. (A second bar—a tonic-and-dominant tag—happens to be identical with the first bar of the new Liszt concerto; Mr. Lowenthal, a neat soloist in both works, played with the coincidence wittily in his cadenzas for the Haydn.

Liszt's 1839 concerto was more advanced and adventurous in harmonic idiom than any of the new works that were played at an American Composers Orchestra concert in Carnegie Hall a few days later. Michael Torke's piano concerto "Bronze," commissioned by the orchestra, was a twenty-two-minute piece of breathtaking banality. It could figure on a P. D. Q. Bach program as a comedy portrait of a late-Romantic composer who knows the stock figuration of his day, has thought of a catchy tag or two, and has forgotten all but his nursery harmony. In a program note Torke was quoted as saying, "I intend to explore ideas of classical voice leading, classical rhythms, and classical functional harmonies in the piano concerto. . . . I think it is absolutely cool to be a 'classical' composer." Torke himself delivered the solo part with aplomb, and the players—good New York musicians whom on other days one hears playing Carter, Babbitt, Wuorinen with conviction—went along with him supportively.

Eric Stokes's "The Ghost Bus to Eldorado (And Other Roadside Attractions)," another A.C.O. commission, was a trite, trivial suite. Kamran Ince's "Before Infrared," which received its New York première, was more interesting. Ince and Torke were for a while fellow-students at Eastman. Torke, who was born in 1961, first came to Carnegie in 1985, with "Bright Blue Music," commissioned by the New York Youth Symphony—twelve minutes of attractively animated music that began, remained, and ended in D major. Since then, he has continued to compose buoyantly, but more boringly—stuck in diatonic grooves and repetitive patterns. Ince, who was born in 1960, first came to Carnegie in 1986, with "Infrared Only," commissioned by the Youth Symphony—ten minutes of attractively animated music that moved. Since then, he has shown further awareness that Wagner, a century and a half ago, and his successors opened some harmonic paths worth exploring. But "Before Infrared" does not show his latest thinking; it was composed back in 1986, as an introduction to "Infrared Only." Eleven minutes long, it holds the ear with its colors, its gaits, its contrasts. As I said after "Infrared Only," Mahler and Varèse seem to be playing at once, fruitfully, quirkily, on a lively, original mind.

The concert was initially billed to end with Varèse's "Amériques"—a modern work, first performed in 1926, that would have made most of what went before seem jejune twaddle. But instead Barber's First Symphony was done—an amiable, well-made, unchallenging composition, old-fashioned even when it appeared, in 1936. David Zinman conducted, and he inspired playing of tonal beauty from the instrumentalists. Despite the quantity of lightweight and "nostalgic" music in recent A.C.O. programs, musicians need not yet give up on the orchestra: it has announced the New York première of Carter's Violin Concerto, conducted by Michael Gielen, for December.

The first big event of Lincoln Center's Mozart celebration—in which all Mozart's works, from K.1 to K.626, are to be performed between now and August, 1992—is the Met's new "Zauberflöte." The opera had been off the bills there since 1981; the previous production, in Chagall scenery, dated from 1967. Jean-Pierre Ponnelle was first engaged to replace it; after his death, Werner Herzog was invited and announced, but the company decided that it did not have the time to "realize his conception" adequately, and settled instead for a re-creation of Glyndebourne's celebrated, well-seasoned 1978 production, which was directed by John Cox and designed by David Hockney. At La Scala, in San

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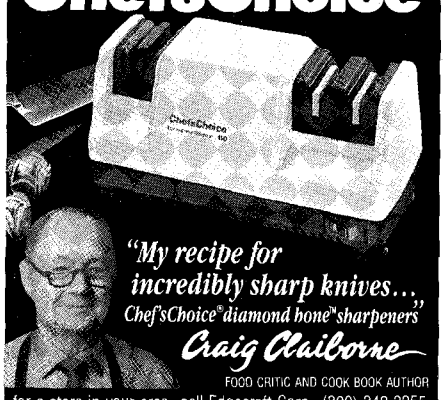

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Francisco, and elsewhere, Hockney's designs had already shown themselves to be effective in enlargement. (The Michigan Opera Theatre will be the next to use them, in Detroit's forty-three-hundred-seat Masonic Temple.) The Met painted and built its own version while borrowing some "elements" from San Francisco. Hockney's scenes are colorful, loving, playful without being frivolous, solemn (where appropriate) without being heavy, and altogether distinguished. They range from a pretty Tuscan panel at the start (Tamino's personal "Flight Into Egypt," pursued by an Uccello dragon), through a grand temple approach evoking the Metropolitan Museum staircase, to a striking realization of Schikaneder's final scenic prescription: "The whole theatre becomes a Sun." On the huge Met stage, the perspectives that are plotted through a series of painted drops do not read accurately except from center seats. (*Die Strahlen der Sonne* pursued a jagged, broken course on their way to where I sat, on the main left aisle.) One backcloth was rumpled. At the C-major blaze after the trials have been successfully endured, there was darkness instead of "a brightly lit temple portal . . . the utmost radiance" (not the fault of Gil Wechsler, the Met lighting man, but inherent, it seems, in the technic of the scene changes). One more quibble: beardless, Sarastro loses dignity, suggests a kindly, voluble vicar. But, for the rest—delight in this visual realization of a great opera that can bear many kinds of approach.

James Levine, who has often conducted the "Flute" at Salzburg, did so for the first time here. The overture was a miracle of beautiful playing, sensitive phrasing, luminous detail. So was the march that opens Act II. When the curtain rose and the stage became the main focus, the "accompaniment" remained on this elevated level: alert, eloquent, but never obtrusive. The first-night cast was excellent. Kathleen Battle was a lovely, generous Pamina. Francisco Araiza's Tamino was brave, clear, and accurate. Manfred Hemm (in a Met début) was a lively, direct Papageno. Kurt Moll, the Sarastro, sang nobly. Luciana Serra (in another Met début) struck the Queen of the Night's coloratura with brilliant precision. Anthony Laciura was a keen Monostatos. The stage director was Guus Mostart, who had assisted Mr. Cox in the original Glyndebourne production.

LAST week, Dawn Upshaw—another famous Pamina—and Mr. Levine gave a pleasing song recital in Alice Tully Hall. In her opening group, five of Wolf's Goethe settings, Miss Upshaw was subtle of inflection but a shade monochrome in fresh, girlish timbre. The colors came from the piano: Mr. Levine is an accompanist unparalleled. His Steinway was open wide, but never was the singer drowned. In Wolf, Richard Strauss, Shostakovich, and Rachmaninoff he played with the utmost delicacy and expressiveness, with magical pianissimo, with full but never clangorous forte. Miss Upshaw was poignant in the silverpoint sketches of Strauss's Ophelia songs. In three of his Brentano songs—"An die Nacht," "Ich wollt ein Sträusslein binden," and "Als mir dein Lied erklang"—her voice began to flower; in the last, it rang with rapture. The Brentano settings—perhaps Strauss's best songs—were composed for Elisabeth Schumann. Alfred Orel's account of the composer's accompanying of Schumann seemed applicable to Mr. Levine's of Miss Upshaw:

> Such freedom and yet at the same time the highest precision in following the singer, whilst also guiding her interpretation, such support and then again the subtlest understanding of where she needed help. . . . Without actually becoming "orchestral" he . . . used the possibilities of the piano in an inimitable way.

For Shostakovich's Blok songs, Raymond Gniewek and Jascha Silberstein, the Met first violin and first cello, joined the duo, and the sombre, powerful cycle received an intent, memorable performance. So did three songs from Rachmaninoff's Opus 34: "The Muse," "Dissonance," and "What Wealth of Rapture." The first and second, an idyll and another "Verklärte Nacht," were sung—and played—with gentle, glowing tenderness; the last with passion. The encores were Mozart's "Das Veilchen," Wolf's "Gleich und Gleich," and Ives's Berceuse.

—ANDREW PORTER

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Females are capable of producing about 18 babies during their lifespan, half of which are usually one or the other sex.
—*Rockland (N.Y.) Review.*

Noted.

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REFLECTIONS

ISLAM AND THE WEST

THE instability of the Middle East occurs at a fault line dividing two histories, two pasts. Trouble arises along this line where real nations abut a zone of historical non-nationhood. In the Persian Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean, the zone of non-nationhood includes nearly the entire Arabian peninsula (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Emirates, and other Gulf states), Syria, and Jordan; the true nations are Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran, Yemen, and Iraq.

It may seem odd to describe as nationless a region where determined, even aggressive, modern states exist and the political forces driving events employ the language of nationalism and national liberation. These states, however, are not nations; they lack historical roots, national integrity. Not one is more than seventy years old. Each is vulnerable. Kuwait exists, or existed, because of an agreement made between an agent of the British government of India and an Arab chieftain at the end of the nineteenth century—a time when British policy was driven by a concern over defending lines of imperial communication. The Sabah abu Abdullah family wanted protection against the exactions of Ottoman imperial authorities, who were nominally sovereign over Kuwait. Kuwait's economy at the time rested largely on the pearl and hide trades.

Historically, the points of reference of this region are religion, commune, empire, caliphate. States exist there because in the twentieth century it is considered necessary for people to live in nation-states, not in multinational, multireligious empires. But necessity does not make nations. The true nations of the region, on the other hand, possess the social and historical credentials of nationhood. The Persian state, today's Iran, is twenty-five hundred years old—nearly as old as the Chinese state. Egypt's national continuity reaches back almost five thousand years. Sumer, the ancestor of Iraq, is nearly as old.

All the Eastern Mediterranean states are twentieth-century creations. Israel exists where Jewish kingdoms existed in antiquity, but is itself a product of secular energies and of a romantic nineteenth-century nationalism, which said that every people should have a state. That idea was responsible for the creation of modern Greece, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia as well as of Israel. Theodor Herzl, a Hungarian journalist, was appalled by the anti-Semitism revealed in France by the Dreyfus affair, which he covered as a correspondent for a Vienna newspaper. His 1896 pamphlet "Der Judenstaat," arguing that Jews should have their own state, inspired a movement that, given a terrible momentum by the Nazis' attempt to exterminate European Jewry, became a military as well as political campaign to establish that Jewish state, against the opposition of Arabs and of the British government, which was the trustee of mandated Palestine under the League of Nations.

When Israel was created, in 1948, a state was established which asserted its legitimate continuity with the Jewish nation that since Roman times had survived in diaspora, in a place where those in occupation, the Palestinians, were not a historical nation but members of an imperial civilization and an overarching "Arab nation." The struggle begun then between the Palestinians and the Jews continues today, and it is not evident that it will ever end. One of its consequences has been the creation, in diaspora, of that self-conscious Palestinian nation, which had not previously existed.

Palestine, together with modern Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon and parts of what now are western Iraq and northern Saudi Arabia, constituted what in the Ottoman period and earlier was known as Syria. For millennia, this

She'll be riding six white horses when she comes. Stop. She'll be riding six white horses when she comes. Stop. She'll be riding six white horses, she'll be riding six white horses, she'll be riding six white horses when she comes. Stop.
That's just like your mother.
Sharmahar

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Syria was politically fragmented; its fertility and its command of trade routes made it the object of repeated invasions and conquests. Local political power was dispersed and contested even under four centuries of Ottoman rule. In modern history the only "nation" there was Christian Lebanon—predominantly Roman Catholic, practicing the ancient Maronite rite, derived from the patriarchate of Antioch. None of the other religious minority communities in Syria—Druze (a sect of Islamic origins), Kurds, Armenians, Turkomans, Orthodox Christians, the Islamic minorities—possessed the numbers and the staying power to impose themselves in modern times as a nation.

Iraq is one of several states that were formally established—within "extremely artificial frontiers," according to Hugh Seton-Watson, the eminent British student of nationalism—by the agreements after the First World War which settled the Allies' affairs with the dismantled Ottoman Empire. Syria and Lebanon were given their present frontiers and made French mandates under the League of Nations. Transjordan, subsequently the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and Iraq became monarchies under British mandate. Palestine remained under direct British rule as a mandated territory.

Saudi Arabia had no international political identity at all until 1932, when the present kingdom was established by the Wahhabi (a puritanical Muslim sect), whose leader, Ibn Saud, had wrested control of the region from several other Bedouin territorial chieftains, including Hussein, King of the Hejaz and Protector of the Holy Places. Hussein's son Faisal had led the Arab Revolt, during the First World War (T. E. Lawrence was his military counsellor), and was made King of Iraq in the settlements that followed. His brother Abdullah became Emir (later King) of Transjordan. The present King Hussein of Jordan is Abdullah's grandson. After the Second World War, all these states became sovereign except Palestine, which, because of the struggle between the Arabs and the Jews, was forcibly partitioned. (The United Nations voted its peaceful partition, but the Palestinians and the neighboring Arab states resisted.) The larger part became the state of Israel.

Iraq has a serious claim to a national identity and national autonomy because the modern state exists in historical continuity with a distinct and formidable past, reaching back more than ten thousand years, to the Mesolithic Age, when the earliest evidence exists of agriculture, and hence of civilization. The first distinct culture zones of early Neolithic life, six millennia ago, are those in northern Mesopotamia and Syria, Palestine, and Anatolia. In the fourth millennium B.C., there were in Mesopotamia villages and towns, and the beginnings of urban life—that is, specialization of labor, pooled surpluses, full-time craftsmen, professions. At the same time, the inhabitants of southern Mesopotamia invented writing, and probably the wheel as well, and discovered and used bronze. The civilizations that subsequently succeeded one another here include the Sumerian, the Akkadian, the Babylonian, and the Assyrian. (One of Saddam Hussein's enterprises in recent years has been to re-create the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.) Sumer was a political entity, ruled (like contemporaneous Egypt) by priest-kings in the third millennium B.C. The Akkadian Empire, its borders roughly those of modern Iraq, combined the city-states of Sumer and Akkad. Mesopotamia's imperial preëminence, around 2250 B.C., coincided with Egyptian decline and loss of unity. Its ruler in the second millennium, Hammurabi, was responsible for the legal code that bears his name, which is generally humane but sets a retributive principle for punishment—literally "an eye for an eye"—to which Saddam Hussein would seem to adhere today.

Mesopotamia was subsequently under foreign domination for long periods, by the Persians and, in modern times, the Ottoman Turks and the British. Its current frontiers were arbitrarily drawn by Britain. But the common American notion today of Iraqis as "primitive" and unsophisticated is a verdict on their industrial and technological backwardness by comparison with Europe and the United States; but by other standards Americans and Europeans are the parvenus, barbarians lately come to civilization, and the Iraqi people are at the source of human civilization.

THE Islamic political tradition is imperial, a tradition of nomad empire. Before the Ottoman Empire, there was the medieval Arabian empire, or empires. Empires are not nations. They incorporate nations, and have expanding (or shrinking) frontiers. Unlike nations, they include rather than exclude. They are a suitable political vehicle for a religious civilization. However, the modern world demands nations. The nations that exist today in the Eastern Mediterranean are provisional, not only because they were the creation of the British and the French who ran the peace settlements of 1918-23 but also because in Arab eyes there is supposed to be an "Arab nation," without internal frontiers. Saddam Hussein is a product of the most important modern effort to bring this Arab nation about. In the nineteen-forties, his Ba'ath Party (one wing of it rules Iraq; the other, rival wing rules Syria) set out to create a "nationalist," socialist (that is, concerned with social justice), and secular political vehicle drawing all parts of the Arab nation together into a modern nation-state. (Unsurprisingly, this party was the creation of French-educated Christian and other minority Arabs in Lebanon and Syria. The idea of an Arab nation that would be defined by language and history rather than by religion promised personal legitimatization to them in a society to which they unmistakably belonged but from which they were simultaneously excluded by religion.) An ironic footnote to this program for an Arab nation is that it was greatly influenced by the example of the United States. The Syrian Protestant College, which is now the American University of Beirut, and a Jesuit institution, Saint Joseph's University in Beirut, had since the late nineteenth century conveyed to their students Western

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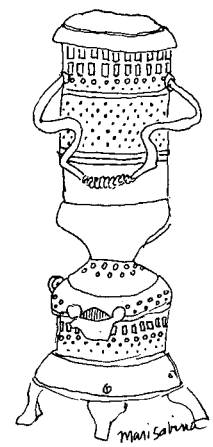
ideas of the secular democratic state.

Islamic modernizers have chiefly succeeded in producing political movements that are secular in nature, like the Ba'ath, rather than in reforming Islam's relationship to modern industrial civilization. These secular movements include the nationalist Wafd Party in Egypt early in this century, Gamal Abdel Nasser's "Arab socialism," the Néo-Destour in Tunisia, and the National Liberation Front in Algeria. The most successful and, thus far, longest-lived secular movement was that of Kemal Atatürk in Turkey, which lasted from 1923 until his death, in 1938. He set out to break the cultural continuity of Turkish society in order to modernize it. Arabic script and Muslim practices were banned. Religious law and religious schools were abolished. This ruthless secularization resembled what the Bolsheviks were doing in the neighboring Muslim regions of the former Russian Empire. Turkey is no longer the aggressively secular state it was then; there is an active and, it seems, growing fundamentalist influence there (as there is also in the Soviet Union's Muslim republics). But it remains a secular republican state with functioning, if imperfect, democratic institutions. Seton-Watson observes that today there exists "a Turkish nation . . . of which a hundred years earlier there had hardly been a sign." Reza Shah Pahlevi, another soldier, tried in the nineteen-thirties to do for Iran what Atatürk had done for Turkey. He, too, fought the religious establishment, and attempted to form a secular (and authoritarian) political culture. He, too, emphasized the pre-Islamic past—in this case, the Persian Empire. His son, Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlevi, until he was deposed, in 1979, attempted to continue his father's efforts but fell victim to his own political and personal pretensions (encouraged by his American ally) and to the revival of fundamentalist religion in Iran and elsewhere in the region.

While the turmoil of the Middle East during the last four decades has a political origin, the dimensions of the unrest extend far beyond politics. It was ignited by the forcible installation of Israel, an essentially European state, in the Holy Land, which the Islamic peoples had dominated since Saladin's defeat of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, in 1187. The Palestinians who were displaced to make way for Israel have sought revenge ever since. This effort has radicalized Arab politics, reintroduced terrorism into international politics, provoked three wars between the Arab states and Israel, and, in Lebanon, produced civil war, national disintegration, and foreign occupation. It has made the United States, as Israel's sponsor, into an object of popular hatred throughout the region.

However, the United States is an object of hatred—combined with fascination—for other reasons as well: it is the avatar of a culturally and economically aggressive modern West, whose challenge to Islamic society is held responsible for a crisis that existed before there was an Israel. This crisis has to do with the inability of Islamic civilization to respond to historical change. Islam is a product not of urban civilization but of nomad society. Nomads gave the world monotheism, and the nomad monotheisms—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—remain the dominant religions of mankind: they are intellectually alive in ways that Hinduism and Buddhism are not; they are combative, confident, characteristically intolerant systems of values and ways of life. For Islam, however, religious conviction no longer translates into cultural or political confidence.



The uneasiness within Islamic society about the Islamic way of life in the twentieth century derives from two related problems. The first is Islam's failure to formulate a modern conception of politics and government capable of dealing on effective terms with the Western world, which is much more powerful in organization, science, and material means. The second is the practical consequences of that discrepancy of power: the resentment and sense of powerlessness engendered within Islam by its domination by the West since the Dutch conquest of Indonesia in the seventeenth century, Clive's defeat of Mogul India in the eighteenth century, Britain's assertion of indirect domination over Egypt and Persia in the nineteenth century, France's colonization of Algeria and establishment of protectorates over Tunisia and most of Morocco, and, finally, the defeat and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War. Added to those have been Israel's repeated military humiliations of the Arabs during the last forty-two years. Now, of course, there is the prospect of still another Western conquest—of Iraq, the strongest of the Arab states, by a coalition of the United States and the European powers, supported by the Soviet Union, and possessing allies within the Arab world itself. That the Arab states are themselves divided by the Gulf affair—a conflict produced by the act of aggression of one Arab state against another—simply intensifies the politico-psychological impact of the crisis, providing further evidence of Arab powerlessness.

Arnold Toynbee, writing before the Second World War, observed that the Muslims had some thirteen centuries before committed themselves to the "proud but unproven belief" that God, in giving them their religion, had guaranteed them a unique destiny in this world as well as in the next, and that they had, "in the strength of it, performed . . . mighty deeds in their earlier history." Toynbee went on to say that they "have had time enough to fall on evil days; and the feebleness of their reaction to their latter-day tribulations indicates that Determinism is just as apt to sap morale in adversity as it is to stimulate it so long as the challenges encountered are within the range of an effective response." On the plight of "the disillusioned predestinarian" who has discovered that God is perhaps not, after all, on his side, Toynbee quotes (FitzGerald's) "Rubaiyat":

> But helpless pieces in the game He plays
> Upon this chequer-board of nights and days,
> Hither and thither moves and checks and slays,
> And one by one back in the closet lays.

THE origins of Islam lie in a reaction in Arabia against foreign interference by Abyssinia, Persia, and Byzantium in the period prior to Muhammad's birth, around 570. Islam was both a patriotic and a religious movement, advocating, as an Edwardian scholar put it, "Arabia for the Arabians." Muhammad unified Arabia,

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and by the time of his death, in 632, foreign power in Arabia had been broken. The first war waged by the caliphs was against the Persians—to subdue Iraq, which then belonged to Persia. The pertinence of this fact need not be labored.

Islam's religious determinism was a great source of power when things were going well—as determinism was, later, for predestinarian Calvinists and Marxists, because it satisfied "the same hunger for an assurance that the forces of the Universe are on the side of the Elect," as R. H. Tawney has remarked. Just as Calvinism allowed the bourgeoisie of the sixteenth century, and Marxism allowed the proletariat of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (and the middle-class revolutionaries who appointed themselves the proletariat's leaders), "to feel that they were a Chosen People, [and] made them conscious of their great destiny in the Providential plan and resolute to realize it," Islam's conviction of predetermined superiority inspired a superb confidence during its early period of almost unstoppable expansion. The Arabs swept out from the Arabian peninsula to Gibraltar, Spain, and France in one direction and nearly to China in the other. But once they were stopped, and the European powers turned a new kind of organizational and technological power against them, to which they had no adequate response, their predestinarianism was reversed, and a corrosive doubt created, which plays upon them today: that defeat was all along inevitable.

The Arab "universal empire" was politically sophisticated, and withstood the migration of its power center from Damascus to the more cosmopolitan Baghdad, and eventually to Istanbul, where the capital of the second Islamic universal empire was established, that of the Ottoman Turks, which lasted until 1918—and went down fighting. Islamic civilization possessed a rich literature and philosophy and an advanced theoretical science (to which we owe modern astronomy and also the zero, hence modern mathematics). It possessed the high technology of the period and more advanced military organization than medieval Europe. It defeated the West in the Crusades, and it won most of the battles of Islam's expansion in Spain, France, and Eastern Europe. Poitiers, Lepanto, Vienna —the great turning points—were, for the Christians over all, damned near-run things. Had the French failed at Poitiers in 732, the Venetians and the Spaniards at Lepanto in 1571, or the Austrians and Poles at Vienna in 1683, the Western world might well be a Muslim world. A famous passage in Gibbon considers the possibility of Koranic instruction in the schools of Oxford if Charles Martel had lost. Saddam Hussein is aware of this history, and believes himself capable of entering its pages by reversing its trend.

The real reason for the West's victory over Islam, however, was not its military capacity. It was the ability of Europe in the Renaissance and in the Enlightenment to reëxamine the fundamentals of its own religion and civilization in the light of the thought of pagan antiquity and a philosophical and scientific rationalism. With respect to material power, Europeans passed from a theocentric science and an artisanal technology to empirical science and industrial technology and manufacture. Why this transition should have occurred in Europe and not in the Islamic world no doubt has to do in part with mere hazards of history and of intellectual development in different societies. It must also connect with the social and cultural roots of the two civilizations. The Jewish and Christian Bible begins with God's commission to Adam to rule over the earth and its creatures, and Western civilization has since been characterized by an exploitative approach to the animal kingdom and the material universe. The Western belief that the world and history itself are to be mastered has its origin there. Hence the great Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and English voyages of exploration, and the intellectual adventurousness that even in the Middle Ages produced secular explanations of astronomical and physical forces, harnessed natural energy, put forth ideas about flying machines—gravity and God defied. Such ideas obviously also existed among the ancient Greeks. Icarus belongs to a convergent Western tradition of defiance of limit, described by reference to another Greek figure as well—Prometheus. The Greeks' theft of fire has brought us to the nuclear explosion. It is, one concedes, an ambiguous legacy.

The identification of religion with civilization in Islamic society blocks a solution to its contemporary problems. From the beginning, Christianity distinguished between religion and the political, or secular, order. There were "things that are Caesar's"—legitimately due to Caesar, ruler of an autonomous political and social order. Because of this distinction, it was possible for Europe to develop secular government, secular knowledge, and secular culture, and, eventually, even largely to cast off the influence of religion. (Whether this abandonment of religion will prove to be complete or lasting is another question. There is, as Freud observed in another context, a return of the repressed.)

Islam is a priestless, unhierarchical, untheological religion. The absence of a speculative theology has inhibited intellectual and scientific reflection, which might have introduced doubt about the religious interpretation of natural phenomena, as happened in the West, but would also have made possible a more vigorous response to the intellectual challenge of the West. The remarkable Arab philosophical flowering of the early Middle Ages, notable above all for Avicenna and the Spaniard Averroës, faded away toward the end of the twelfth century, in a revival of religious orthodoxy and intolerance associated with the rise in influence of the recently converted Turkish peoples from Central Asia. The thinkers associated with classical Greek influences were silenced. (Averroës' subsequent influence was most marked on the Jewish scholars of Languedoc and Provence, who had been expelled from Spain, and on the Christians Albertus Magnus, Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Roger Bacon. A reinterpreted Averroism eventually became, in the schools of northern Italy, the philosophy of Christian theological skepticism and new scientific thought.)

There is considerable irony in the fact that Arab scholars preserved Greek philosophy from the ninth to the twelfth centuries and transmitted it to medieval Europe, thereby making it possible for Aquinas to develop a rationalist theological and philosophical

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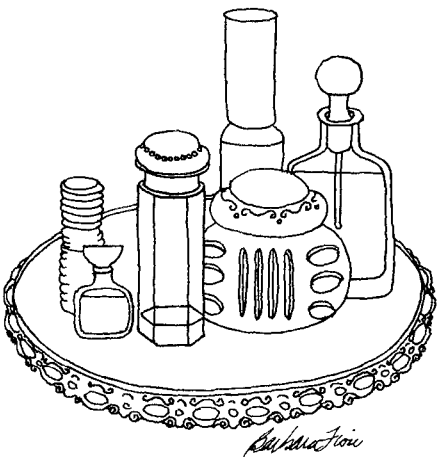
system that reconciled pagan Greek with Christian thought—the very kind of reconciliation that they themselves had tried and failed to bring about between Greek and Islamic thought. Aquinas held that the sources of knowledge are human reason, which Aristotle exemplified, and divine revelation, and that while the latter must be privileged, the former is totally valid in itself. This validation of the secular intelligence provided it with autonomous authority and made possible a philosophical response to the developing modern world for which there was no equivalent in Islam.

In Islam, philosophy, like literature, remained, and remains, bound to the Koran. There has been an Islamic political philosophy, and even a political "science," in that the nature of rule and the problems of authority and administration have been subjects of reflection since classical Islamic times, and Greek political philosophy has been incorporated into the Arabic literature on governing. But in the Islamic world "the principal function of government is to enable the individual Muslim to lead a good Muslim life," Bernard Lewis, the distinguished Islamist, writes, in "The Political Language of Islam." "This is, in the last analysis, the purpose of the state, for which alone it is established by God, and for which alone statesmen are given authority over others. The worth of the state, and the good and evil deeds of statesmen, are measured by the extent to which this purpose is accomplished." This view of the function of the state has decisively inhibited the development of suitable concepts for a modern politics. And when the heads of modern Middle Eastern states have adopted the actual practices of the modern Western nation those practices have often been its worst ones. It is significant, however, that Saddam Hussein has tried to associate his rule with pre-Muslim as well as Muslim history—with Mesopotamia—just as the Shah of Iran tried to present himself as the successor of the ancient Persian monarchs, and as Atatürk embroidered the pre-Muslim past of Turkey. When observant Muslims try to rule without Westernized systems and ideas, they are left with the unsolved problems of the young Iranian intellectuals who were around Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini: how to define an "Islamic economics," an "Islamic finance," an Islamic way of running industry.

No doubt it is important that Islam, as a religion of nomads, has engendered a predominantly oral and literary culture rather than a speculative one. The Arab use of rhetoric—the extravagance of declaration and invective—certainly has been a source of immense confusion in the war of rhetorical abuse in recent months between Baghdad, on the one side, and Washington and an array of Western editorialists, with their own conventions of political discourse, on the other. Lewis observes that when Iraq and Iran were at war, propaganda on both sides made "frequent allusions to events of the seventh and eighth centuries," and that "there can be little doubt that these references are recognized by the vast majority of people in both countries and indeed elsewhere in the Muslim world, and that the force of the allusions is well understood." The capacity for historical reference of the American political class, not to speak of the American majority, risks exhaustion once Sarajevo, Munich, Hitler, the Holocaust, the Cuban missile crisis, and Vietnam are cited.

The scientific and technological failure of Islamic civilization reflects the fact that nomadic technology, on the whole, is fixed; it lacks a capacity for development because, except in the military sphere, it has no need for it. The Christian world of the Middle Ages was urban, agricultural, and maritime. These qualities created technological demands and therefore compelled technological evolution. Yet the science and the mathematics of medieval Arabia were more advanced than Europe's. The failure of Islam occurred between the late Middle Ages and the seventeenth century. Whatever the explanation—and there is no simple one—the West decisively surpassed Islamic society in its capacity for scientific development and social organization and administration, creating a modern industrial technology, modern forms of government and of international society, and the modern speculative and analytical intellectual culture.



Islamic intellectuals and scholars in Southern and Central Asia and the Middle East have made efforts to deal with this problem since the nineteenth century and before. An "Anglo-Oriental" college was founded in Aligarh, in India, in 1875, modelled on a Cambridge college but with teaching done in Urdu. Similar undertakings were sponsored by Tatar merchants in the Volga valley and other Muslim regions of the Russian Empire. Modernizers were active at Al-Azhar University, in Cairo, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and also in Algeria, where many educated Algerians were simply abandoning Islam for French civilization. These efforts ran into the problem that modernizers have faced, not just in Islamic society but everywhere in the non-Western world. If one excludes the unrealizable alternative of reactionary revival—that is, re-creation of some idealized model of what society was like in the past, which is what the Islamic fundamentalists want to accomplish today but cannot—and one also rejects total conversion to Western ideas and standards, the choice that remains is to attempt to produce a deliberate synthesis of civilizations. Any such ambitious undertaking, even if it succeeds, or comes close to doing so, is still likely to lack authenticity and practicality as a program for the ordinary people in an integrally religious society.

The "synthesis" that actually threatens to engulf the masses in the Middle East, as in much of the non-Western world, is a junk Westernization: a submersion in a tide of Western mass commercial culture, usually American, separated from the civilization that manufactured it and knows how to handle it. There are hundreds of thousands of cultivated Muslims who have made creative individual syntheses between their own culture and Western influences and education. (There are many others for whom the effort has been a destructive experi-

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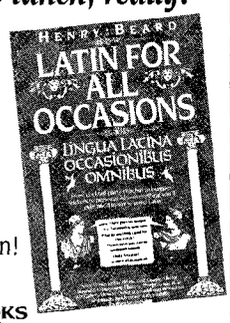

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ence.) But what works for individuals has thus far seemed impossible as a coherent program for a society.

The result for Islam, over the last three centuries, has been repeated political and military defeats, which have produced cultural anxiety and frustration and have involved a form of intellectual and moral subjection to the West. However, the fundamentalist movements in Iran, Lebanon, and elsewhere refuse defeat—a characteristic response, and a doomed one, if the history of other societies overrun by the West in the colonial period is a precedent. The secular, militarized, quasi-socialist Arab or pan-Arab "nationalist" movements that govern in Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, and Algiers are also forms of resistance, but have been scarcely more successful in producing models of society able to compete with the West.

THE moral crisis of Islamic society is what lends such emotional force throughout the Middle East to the present confrontation of Iraq with the United States—a nation that has inadvertently become the legatee of that aggressive, expansionist Western imperial civilization which, in the time of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, Americans believed it was their national mission to dismantle.

What has happened in Iraq, and happened before that in Iran, and the terrible traumas that have been produced by the struggle between the Palestinians and the Israelis all arise from the provisional defeat of a people and a religion by a rival, yet related, civilization. This is what the crisis in the Middle East is fundamentally about. The grievances (and grief) of modern Islam, its paranoia and defiance come from that. It follows that the present conflict cannot settle anything worth settling, except who controls certain oil sources and who rules a given country. These may be matters that require settling, but they should be understood as the relatively small matters they are, and such settlements as they produce should be understood as assuredly insecure ones, productive of further chains of consequence which are very likely to leave all those involved worse off than they are now.

Those who have argued for war against Iraq employ a domino argument, saying that if one did not act now the situation would be worse in the future. Saddam Hussein, it is said, will have the confidence of victory and the weapons of mass destruction with which to threaten the whole Middle East, and even Europe, or the United States. Domino arguments are always intellectually suspect, because the future is simply too open for them to possess other than indicative interest. They are a mode of policy debate, not of analysis. In the nineteen-sixties, Johnson Administration officials claimed that "what happens in South Vietnam will determine the fate of Asia for the rest of this century." It didn't. Essentially the same thing is being said about Iraq and Saddam Hussein. It isn't true. He is (or was until last August) a minor figure in a minor country, nearly all of whose advanced weaponry comes from European, Soviet, and American suppliers. The Western powers imposed a generally successful high-technology trade blockade on the Warsaw Pact countries for thirty-five years. They are capable of doing the same thing with respect to Iraq in the future if they wish to do it. Even if Saddam Hussein somehow comes out of this affair in possession of Kuwait and with his regime intact, he is mortal, and he has more than his share of enemies. The United States found tacit alliance with him acceptable during the Iran-Iraq War, when it was Iran that it feared and hated. It is currently allied with Hafez al-Assad of Syria, who is quite as unsavory a figure as Saddam Hussein. If one is "Hitler," so is the other. But, of course, neither is.

Saddam Hussein can be removed by force from the international scene and his regime overturned if the American people are prepared to pay the price, which could prove a considerable one before this affair is over. International order could, in principle, be served by a demonstration that aggression may be punished, and that the United Nations, now that Soviet obstructionism has ended, is capable of acting on such matters. That this would prove true in practice is a more doubtful proposition, given the chains of unforeseeable consequence any war produces. The proposition that a victory over Iraq will constructively change the relations between the Islamic states and the West ignores the sources and the nature of their differences, which will endure long after Saddam Hussein—and George Bush—have quit the mortal scene.

—WILLIAM PFAFF

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BOOKS

Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth

IN "Righteous Pilgrim: The Life and Times of Harold L. Ickes, 1874-1952" (Holt; $35), T. H. Watkins has found a biographer's ideal subject. Ickes was a peppery personality whose political straightforwardness was rooted in his emotional complexity; a public servant whose achievements as Secretary of the Interior (1933-46) endure unmatched; and a political activist whose concerns, formed a century ago, are a preview of many of our current policy puzzles. His life parallels the history of American progressivism. He was a veteran of the reform movements that in 1912 united under the charismatic leadership of Theodore Roosevelt to form the Progressive Party, and he was chosen for the Cabinet by another charismatic Roosevelt to serve as a living link between the New Deal and T.R.

Watkins, who is a vice-president of the Wilderness Society, and edits its magazine, *Wilderness*, comes to Ickes from one of progressivism's—and Ickes'—causes, conservation. But Ickes was also involved in many other issues, and Watkins has had to master subjects as diverse as ward politics in Chicago at the beginning of the century and the history of Hawaii. (In Ickes' time, Hawaii, like our other territories, was administered by the Department of the Interior.) Watkins' grasp matches Ickes' breadth, and the biographer's judgments are astute and humane. And, besides, he writes wonderfully.

Ickes' early life was as forlorn as a Dickens waif's. He grew up in Altoona; his ancestors, mostly Germans and Scots, had immigrated to Pennsylvania before the American Revolution, and prospered. Downward mobility set in with Ickes' father, who was often drunk and rarely home. Ickes' mother, a devout Republican and pious Presbyterian, depended on Harold to run the household and made the boy the confidant of her hysterics. After she died, in 1890, an aunt took Harold and a younger sister to Chicago, where her husband owned a drugstore. Harold worked in the store while he finished high school, and so impressed his teachers that one of them persuaded the president of the University of Chicago, William Rainey Harper, to give him enough work on campus to pay his tuition. He picked up other jobs to support himself; one year, he survived on a single fifteen-cent meal a day. He was a student leader—a member of the debating club, an editor of the college newspaper, the founder of the tennis association, the president of the Republican Club, and the treasurer of the American Republican College League. Ickes' habit of overwork, developed in his youth, was reinforced by his unhappy first marriage, to an heiress, Anna Wilmarth Thompson, in 1911. Work became a refuge from a wretched home life. (Anna was killed in an automobile accident in 1935, and, in 1938, Ickes married Jane Dahlman, a beauty thirty-nine years his junior who adored him. By then, it was too late to change; he went right on overworking.)

After college, Ickes became a newspaper reporter in Chicago and then went to law school at the university. Both as a journalist and as a lawyer Ickes regarded his own advancement as secondary to the battle for righteousness—starting with the never-ending struggle for honest government in Chicago. Anna, who was capable if not lovable, shared Ickes' political ideals. Attracted to the Southwest and to Indian culture, she built a vacation home in New Mexico, and published a well-reviewed book, "Mesa Land"; she also revived Ickes' interest in Native Americans, which had first been aroused by his college courses in anthropology. She was elected to the Illinois Legislature in 1928 and again in 1930; Ickes served as her campaign manager, even though she ran as a regular, not a progressive, Republican. In 1932, the Democrats, looking for a respected public figure with experience in political organization, turned to Ickes, and he agreed to head their Western Independent Republican Committee for Roosevelt. Anna was convinced that his acceptance had imperilled her re-election (it hadn't), but he mollified his furious wife by promising to ask for the post of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, in the Department of the Interior, if Roosevelt won the election. Political maneuvers that Ickes never wholly understood—in Watkins' account they seem partly nasty and partly

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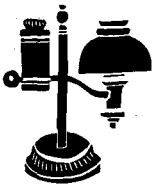
funny—gave him the whole department instead.

The Department of the Interior had been established in 1849 to look after public lands, and by 1933 it had acquired a host of other responsibilities and a well-deserved reputation for corruption. By this time, the reader knows that Ickes will administer his department's sprawling mandate with absolute probity, but he began his Washington career with a near-scandal that's worth noting because it illuminates changing journalistic mores. Ickes was involved in an astonishingly indiscreet love affair but escaped the consequences because newspapers at that time wouldn't print, or even mention, the anonymous letters that his mistress's *other* lover sent them.



Some historic battles in which Ickes was involved—F.D.R.'s failed plan to "pack" the Supreme Court, for one—arose from conflicts that are built into our system. Other stories deal with matters to which we pay attention only sporadically, such as our destruction of our own abundance. Ickes' public service offers a concise retrospect, for instance, of the speed with which we dissipated our petroleum resources. Right after taking office, F.D.R. asked Ickes to chair a conference of governors of the oil-producing states in order to arrange an agreement to limit production. (A common response to the Depression's falling prices had been to pump more oil, and at one point overproduction drove the price down to between twenty and twenty-five cents a barrel. Even at that price, there was not enough demand.) The conference's agreement became a section of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, but the Supreme Court ruled the act unconstitutional in 1935. Ickes, however, had learned a lot about oil and oil producers, and in May of 1941 the President appointed him Petroleum Coördinator for National Defense; the next month, Watkins says, Ickes "declared war on Japan" by holding up a tanker loading at Philadelphia and bound for Japan after a Philadelphia defense manufacturer complained that he needed the oil. The East Coast was facing an oil shortage because we had lent tankers to England. (Some progressives were pacifists, and others became isolationists, but Ickes was an aggressive interventionist, just as Teddy Roosevelt had been.) F.D.R. overruled Ickes' order, explaining to him that our oil shipments were an effort to appease Japan. We all know how *that* came out. What is striking is that as recently as 1941 this country had so much oil that we were trying to use it as a weapon of foreign policy. Watkins wants the reader to appreciate the splendid job Ickes did assuring that all our wartime petroleum needs were met, but the biographer also follows a story whose outcome wasn't so triumphant. During the war, Ickes foresaw a time when America's domestic production could no longer meet America's energy needs, but his projects were killed after he resigned from the government. One proposal—to form an international commission to estimate the world's long-term demand for petroleum—might have persuaded us to think much harder about conservation much earlier. However, the aftermath of the war brought a whole new collection of problems (what to do about the atom bomb, for instance), and conservation fell off the American political agenda.

Ickes' career suggests that the electorate—or its leaders—can cope with only a limited number of issues at a time. Without confusing the reader, Watkins' narrative presents a picture of the simultaneous but diverse urgencies at work in politics which can override the best-laid plans. There's the saga of the Public Works Administration, for instance. In 1933, the President asked Ickes to administer a program of public works to help re-start the economy. Ickes devised an elaborate screening system to assure that each proposal—for a bridge, say, or a sewer system—met a genuine need, that its engineering was sound, and that the jurisdiction seeking the improvement could afford it. (The P.W.A. granted some funds outright, but mostly made thirty-year loans at four per cent.) The P.W.A. fulfilled the progressive dream of substituting order and expertise for slapdash patronage, and it was popular with Congress and the public; many of its works, long since paid for, still serve. Surrounded as we are by crumbling roads and bridges, we read of Ickes' work with envy as well as regret. But Ickes' deliberation—he admitted he was building for the long run—was one of the reasons that his projects, monumental in every sense, made no real dent in unemployment; in 1935, Roosevelt began shifting appropriations to the Works Progress Administration, run by Harry Hopkins, the Federal Emergency Relief Administrator, who promised to hire workers fast, observing, "People don't eat in the long run—they eat every day."

Watkins helps us understand the mixture of temperament, ideology, ambition, and vanity that affected the relations among his all-star New Deal cast. Though the author is bound to follow where Ickes leads, he never pretends that his subject was impartial in his judgment of events and people. Through Watkins, we see how even a subordinate as deeply devoted as Ickes can create headaches for his chief. Ickes admired Roosevelt, who teased and coddled him, manipulated and trusted him, took advantage of his loyalty and, I think, really liked him. But Ickes could be dreadfully insensitive when he wanted something. For instance, he craved the Forest Service; he had his heart set on creating a Department of Conservation within the Department of Interior. He was willing to give up some programs and bureaus (he had invented a Soil Erosion Service in Interior in 1933; in 1935, it went to the Department of Agriculture as the Soil Conservation Service) to acquire others. Ickes thought his department should get the Forest Service and the Biological Survey from Agriculture, and the Bureau of Fisheries from the Department of Commerce. He never got the Forest Service—he lost twice in two attempts in Congress to get it—and his struggle for it turned into a personal feud with Henry A. Wallace, the Secretary of Agriculture. Watkins says their battle "put a major strain on the foundations of the New Deal throughout most of Roosevelt's second term." Ickes' incessant demands that the President do the right thing came at a time when the President could not afford to alienate supporters by taking sides. Although Watkins isn't writing a history of the Roosevelt Presidency, he gives us the different emotional tones of Roosevelt's four terms. The first was brisk, optimistic, and active, and the third and fourth were absorbed in foreign policy and war, but the second was less confident, less certain of its direction: the President couldn't translate his landslide victory of 1936 into congressional support, the Depression lingered perplexingly, and the suc-

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cess of Fascism abroad put democracy on the defensive everywhere.

IN his autobiography Ickes confessed that he had shed his mother's religious orthodoxy but added, "I still admire the strength and character of Calvinism." It's obvious that in his political career he applied the moral rigor and intensity of his mother's faith to secular issues. It seems equally clear that his lifelong concern for victims and outsiders owes something to his abused, exploited, neglected childhood. Watkins never belabors the obvious. He emphasizes Ickes' pertinacity. Particularly during the nineteen-twenties, when the country and his own Republican Party turned away from reform, Ickes paid a price in political isolation and personal loneliness for his undeviating loyalty to progressivism. Almost nothing he attempted in the nineteen-twenties seemed to work; he couldn't even raise enough support outside his own small circle of do-gooders to start a Chicago branch of the N.A.A.C.P. But although, year by year, Ickes seems to have been most often on the losing side, historically he came out a winner. In his lifetime he saw several of his controversial causes (woman suffrage, the eight-hour day) become the custom of the country. He desegregated the Interior Department (and refused to enforce the existing segregation on National Park Service golf courses) and hired qualified blacks for professional posts. Marian Anderson sang at his memorial service. (In 1939, he had offered her the Lincoln Memorial for an outdoor concert when the D.A.R. refused to let her sing in its Constitution Hall, and, at that concert, introduced her to the audience when most white politicians did not care to be associated with a black personality.) Even his avant-garde interest in Native American art is now a widespread taste. Though he didn't get the Forest Service, his shrewd and ceaseless politicking acquired millions of acres of forestland for the national-parks system, where it has remained safe from the lumber industry. Ickes' feeling for wilderness preservation was a hunch, a not quite rational aesthetic and moral intuition. He wasn't alone; there wasn't much rationality about the wilderness-preservation movement in his lifetime. Since his day, though, we have found growing scientific evidence that the human species, for its own well-being—possibly its survival—needs a lot of wilderness on the planet.

Watkins' biography is rich and juicy—worth reading just for fun. If you want a moral, though, or a lesson, Ickes' career demonstrates that a life of absolute dedication can sometimes transform one generation's crackpot radicalism into the next generation's conventional wisdom.

—NAOMI BLIVEN

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE HEALER, by Aharon Appelfeld, translated from the Hebrew by Jeffrey M. Green (Grove Weidenfeld; $16.95). To find a cure for his daughter's neurasthenia, Felix, a well-off Viennese businessman who is a stridently assimilated Jew, decamps from his beloved city (it is 1937) for the Carpathian Mountains, where a famous healer is supposedly working miracles. This exodus carries along with it Felix's entire family—his daughter, his wife, with whom he is barely on speaking terms, and his loutish son. During their icy rural sojourn, Felix increasingly appreciates his son's physical prowess and animal spirits, and puts off chiding him about his failing academic career, while the healer turns out to be a rabbi whose ambiguous prescription, taken up by mother and daughter, is frequent prayer. Felix begins to feel estranged from his own assumptions—a feeling that turns to terror when he returns home to find pictures of Jesus over his bed. All this may seem heavy-handed to some readers, but to others the story's spectral, abstract language will succeed in giving the tale the strength of allegory.

LICORICE, by Abby Frucht (Graywolf; $18.95). A slow, spellbound summer in a small college town, the kind of place that people are always moving away from to somewhere more exciting. Liz, an impish and impulsive young wife, mother, and postal employee, develops an addiction to chewy black licorice, along with a stupendous new sexual appetite—an insatiable hunger that by some baffling turn of logic drives her from her husband's embrace rather than further into it. Meanwhile, she is distracted by a wayward passion for a virile hobo who camps out near the

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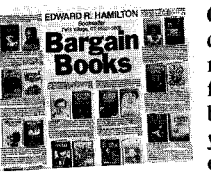

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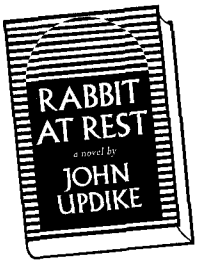

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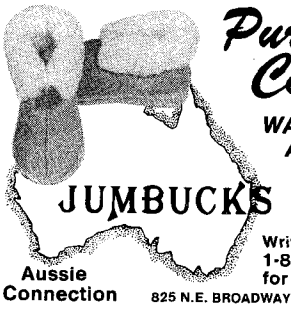

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railroad tracks, and a schoolgirl crush on a woman she has met only once but with whom she engages in intimate imagined conversation. Her husband, who is so tender and at pains to be patient that he hardly seems real, draws a tiny outline of Liz's hand on the calendar for each day she goes on refusing to touch or be touched, while she takes long walks and wonders if she might not just keep on walking and never return to him. The quirky twists that bring this marital stalemate to an end may leave the reader incredulous or tickled, or both, as Ms. Frucht exerts the pressure of her polymorphous fancy on what would otherwise be a familiar story.

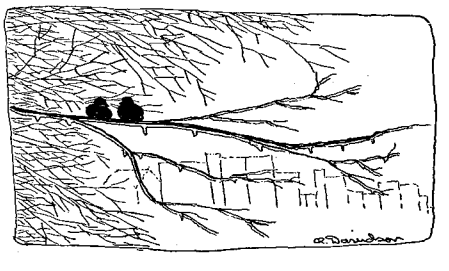
GENERAL

India: A Million Mutinies Now, by V. S. Naipaul (Viking; $24.95). In 1962, the author went for the first time to India, from which his ancestors had emigrated, and wrote a book about it, full of grim observations on the life of its people, and forebodings about its future as a nation. Now, almost three decades later, after his most recent visit, he presents us with a report reflecting a very different mood and a different India. Although prey to the ills of other modern industrial societies—the "criminalization" of business and politics among them—as well as to the overcrowding, squalor, and religious factionalism that have always plagued it, India is coming to terms with its independence. Life has become looser, Mr. Naipaul found: "Particularities that had been frozen by foreign rule, or by poverty or lack of opportunity or abjectness had begun to flow again." He travelled from Madras to Delhi, talking with people in all walks of life—Brahmans, gangsters, rich men, a movie scriptwriter, a terrorist, a holy man, a hotelkeeper, a poet leader of the down-and-out. Mr. Naipaul is, as always, a master of description, and few significant details escape him.

Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius, by Ray Monk (Free Press; $29.95). This lucid and discerning biography demonstrates the relationship between Wittgenstein the man—a figure so eccentric and magnetic that he became a "character" both in real life and in literature—and Wittgenstein the thinker, whose influence on twentieth-century philosophy cannot be overstated. He came from a wealthy Viennese family, and gave his fortune away in a quest for moral perfection that could easily be mistaken for self-punishment. His perfectionism meant that he wrote slowly and with difficulty, and published comparatively little. Mr. Monk, a young English philosopher, does a superb job of clarifying the evolution of Wittgenstein's thought. He shows us what questions perplexed the neophyte who entered Cambridge to work in mathematical logic under Bertrand Russell in 1912, and why, by 1939, Wittgenstein had decided that mathematical logic was a "philosophical aberration." Mr. Monk's narrative shows us, too, why Wittgenstein's legacy continues to attract some thinkers, and why others reject his conviction that the usefulness of the scientific method is limited.

Sermons in Stone, by Susan Allport (Norton; $19.95). The stones in which Ms. Allport finds sermons are in walls, particularly the walls of stone-rich New England. They are to her a source, if not of uplift, at least of a new approach to regional history. It is commonly supposed that these walls came into being through the use by thrifty Yankee farmers of stones removed in clearing their fields. The truth is that the wall builders turned to stone only when there was no longer any forest from which to build wooden fences. Ms. Allport discusses the town fence viewer, a once important public servant, and she quotes an old New England saying: "When you buy meat you buy bones, when you buy land you buy stones." She has given us a lively and often thoughtful book, and it is further enlivened by many fine line drawings of walls and wall-building techniques by David Howell, her husband and fellow-enthusiast.

A Hole in the World, by Richard Rhodes (Simon & Schuster; $19.95).



Mr. Rhodes, who won a Pulitzer Prize with "The Making of the Atom Bomb," subtitles this account of his early years "An American Boyhood." It begins with his mother's violent suicide in 1938, and leads Richard and his older brother Stanley through a series of boarding houses, to their stepmother, Anne, ominously introduced as having had "four or five husbands prior to my father." Anne swiftly establishes herself as commandant of the household; the boys' father is a shadowy figure, a feckless collaborator who sits at Anne's table eating steak while Richard and Stanley are given half-rotten hard-boiled eggs. Turned out of the house from morning till night, the brothers become "urban Huckleberry Finns"; Stanley tirelessly explores the storm sewers of Kansas City, and Richard wanders its snowy streets, obsessed with space travel and pulp science fiction. Though their maltreatment is harrowing, it is not allowed to eclipse the fraternity of the two brothers, and Stanley, at thirteen, finally saves them by going to the police. Mr. Rhodes' book is a powerful case study of child abuse, and an evocation of a boy forced by terrible circumstances to become a dreamer. Photographs.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

A Morning for Flamingos, by James Lee Burke (Little, Brown; $18.95). This new adventure told by the Cajun detective Dave Robicheaux opens with an explosion—the murderous escape of a professional killer being driven to the Louisiana state penitentiary and the electric chair, who leaves Robicheaux for dead in a ditch. Revenge draws Robicheaux from his peaceful bayou habitat and leads him into the Mafia drug world of New Orleans. Nobody working in the genre holds us more compellingly than Mr. Burke, or with such style and ferocity. And, it must be added, he stands all but alone in the invention of character, including here a gang lord as fatally complicated as Jay Gatsby.

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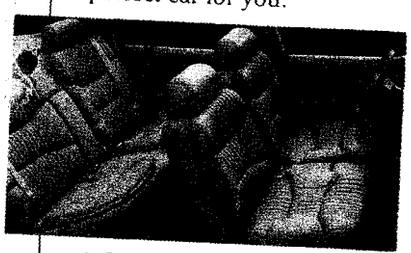

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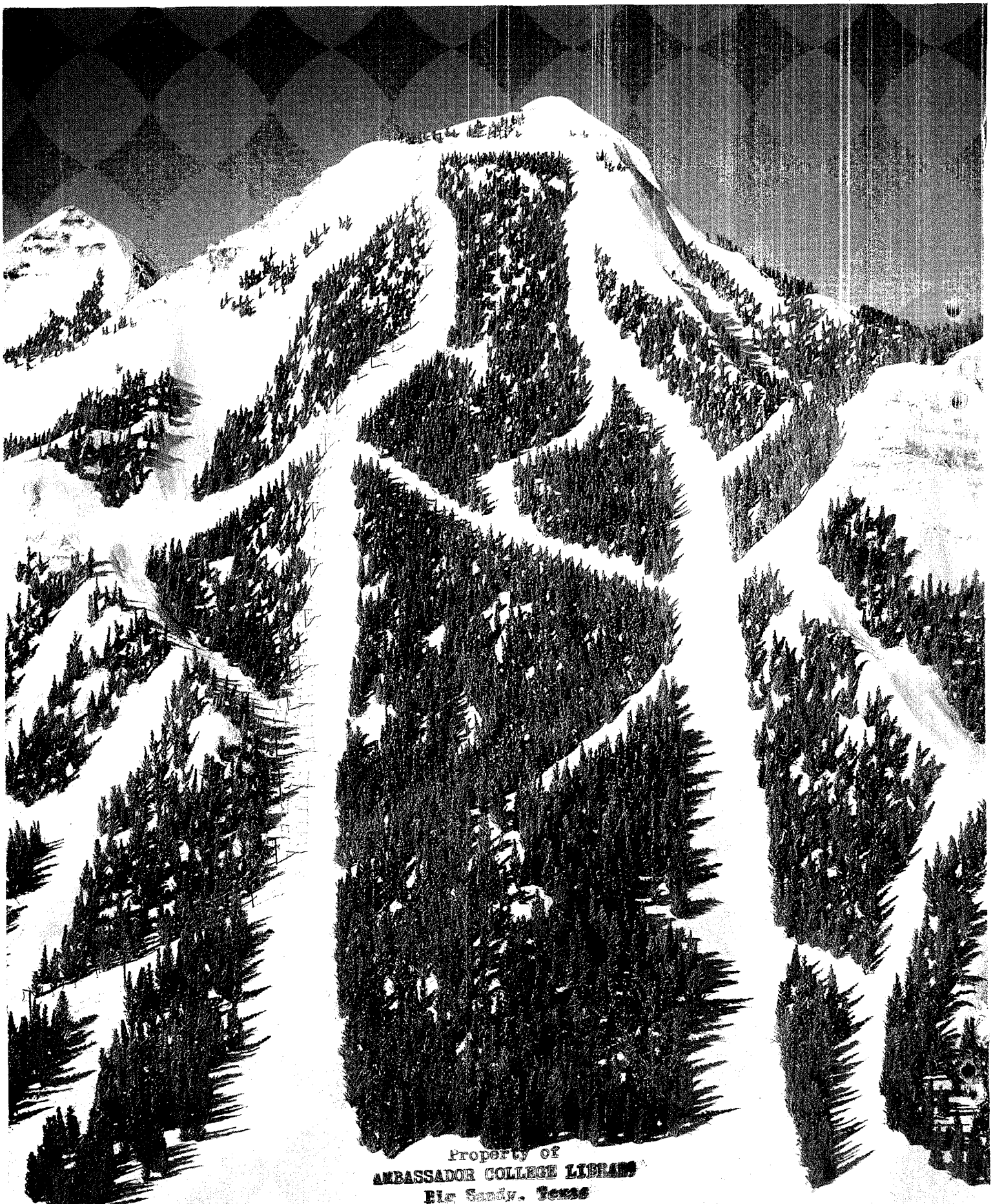

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